

A CASE STUDY TO SHOW THE IMPACT THAT DIVERSIFYING LEADERSHIP
HAS ON A SMALL CONGREGATION SEEKING TO BECOME MULTIETHNIC

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GLOSSARY

diversity. Within the scope of this thesis, the term diversity describes people of various opinions or appearance, predominately in the area of language or skin tone, although it does not exclude socio-economic or other differences.

Homogeneous Unit Principle. A philosophy of church growth which believes that the greatest opportunities for evangelism and church growth happen when there is limited diversity in the church, since people desire to learn and grow from people who look and act like them. This principle is described in detail beginning on page 41.

Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is ultimately seen as the place where God's presence is. Perfectly reflected in heaven, it is our desire to see His kingdom here on earth, reflected in our worship, and our desire to see His perfect will fulfilled. For a more complete description, please refer to the section on the Kingdom of God starting on page 11.

monoethnic. Within the scope of this thesis, the term monoethnic refers to a group of people where over eighty percent of the group share a similar skin color and language.

multicultural. Multicultural is a term that goes beyond a difference in skin color and language; focuses on differences in culture and beliefs, even among people of similar skin color and language.

multiethnic. Within the scope of this thesis, the term multiethnic refers to a group of people where eighty percent or less of the group share a similar skin color and language.

racialization. Within the scope of this thesis, the term racialization refers to individuals or groups that do not deliberately seek to discriminate against those of different skin color or languages, but find themselves gravitating towards those who look and speak like them in areas such as employment, housing, and worship.

racism. Within the scope of this thesis, the term racism refers to individuals or groups who not only share a similar skin color and language, but believe that their particular group is more significant or relevant (superior) than other groups. Racism is the act of discrimination and oppression against those who are different.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Thesis Topic and Research Questions

The following project will explore the impact that adding diversity to our leadership staff, and on our platform, will have on the Elm Street Community Church, Fitchburg, MA. This is a congregation that is on the verge of becoming multiethnic. After having outreaches that meet the needs of different ethnicities and developing cross-cultural relationships, we have stagnated at a place of being a borderline multiethnic church. It is my belief that the absence of multicultural leadership among those making decisions and those who are on the platform on Sunday mornings has hindered individuals of different non-dominant ethnicities from being involved in the life of the church.

Therefore, for my thesis proposal the Elm Street Community Church will be adding a part-time Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministry. This person will be of a different ethnicity than the majority ethnicity (Caucasian) of the church body. This person will take a prominent place assisting in leading the service, as well as be a part of our Elders' Board and leadership. It is my expectation that over the course of this project we will see a higher percentage of minorities attend services and be involved in the ministries of the church.

In the process of this case study I will seek to answer the following important questions:

- What is the biblical and theological framework for bringing together the different ethnicities in our community for the glory of God, and for developing cross-cultural leadership?

- What research can help congregants deal with the impact that diversity in leadership can have on unity in the church, and how can the church expect to deal with conflict that will invariably arise when different cultures with different ways of dealing with things come together?
- What kind of programmatic changes are made when diversity is added to the leadership team, and what kind of practical impact is made by having diversity in leadership?
- In what ways does increased participation by members of ethnic minority groups in leadership contribute to the diversity of the congregation?

These questions are designed to support the following thesis hypothesis: Adding other ethnicities to our leadership team, both in our planning and on our platform, will bring about increased diversity in a congregation that is striving to become multiethnic.

Background and Rationale

I grew up in the predominately mono-ethnic Caucasian town of Hopkinton, MA, where my family and I attended the predominately white First Congregational Church of Hopkinton (now Faith Community Church). I was raised in a middle-class family with a mother and a father. Furthermore, most of my friends lived in similar situations.

My first real exposure to different ethnicities was when I chose to go to the local technical high school. I developed a friendship with a teen named Vinny, a young person from the projects of Framingham. Vinny was Puerto Rican who was being raised by a single mom. I remember going over to his house and realizing how radically different it

was than mine. It was there that I got my first glimpse of challenges that I had not seen before.

When I went to college I developed a relationship with Carlos, a young man whose family came from Cuba as refugees due to challenges with Fidel Castro in the 1960s. He was from Chelsea, and again I saw things in the city that were unfamiliar to me.

When I got married, my wife and I moved to West Newton. Although there was racial and ethnic diversity, there was not economic diversity. It was not until we moved to Fitchburg, MA, that I began to see both ethnic and economic diversity again. The church that had called me to be their senior pastor was a mono-ethnic congregation made up predominately of older Finnish people who had been reluctant to change – even though the neighborhood around them had changed. When they asked why a former youth pastor with a call to multi-generational ministry would want to come to a predominately older congregation, I told them that there were plenty of young people around the neighborhood and at the park across the street, but they were not in the building. We needed to figure out how to reach them where they were.

One woman who supported changes (who was in her late 70s at the time) made sure that everyone remembered that the congregation lost a generation when they waited too long to switch from the services being conducted in Finnish to English. She stated that although she was not crazy about the changes I was making to have the service be more multi-generational, she recognized that they had to happen.

During our first year as my daughter was in the local elementary school, we found out that there were kids who lived in our neighborhood who did not have regular meals

outside of what they got when they went to school. Troubled by this, we began to look for opportunities to reach out, understanding that our best chance of having people come to the church was to offer free food. This was different than anything I had ever faced in the communities where I had lived prior to moving to Fitchburg.

We partnered with Project Bread and the Latino Coalition to offer food to youth during that summer, then began our afterschool outreach one day a week (JAM). This outreach enabled us to develop friendships outside our socio-economic standing, and we saw a side to diversity that we had never seen before. It is not like we had not seen it on TV, or driven through depressed areas. But when you develop friendships with people in a different place than you, you get a different perspective on the challenges that people from other ethnicities face.

We saw the effects of families living on welfare, the challenges that come when kids do not get the proper nutrition because their families can not afford healthy food. We saw the impact on youth who are growing up in single-parent homes, some with parents who work multiple jobs to make ends meet, and others who were looking to relive their childhood while leaving their teen children to raise their younger siblings. We saw the effects on the children who are constantly moving from one rough neighborhood to another, always wanting to get out of the neighborhood where our church is located because the neighborhood gets rougher a few houses up from the parsonage.

These relationships began to open our eyes to an America we did not recognize. As we continued our outreaches, and we began to visit people in emergency rooms, help them in the schools, and share our lives with them, we saw that discrimination is alive

and well. There might not be separate bathrooms or different seats on the bus, but there was discrimination. Often subtle and sometimes unintentional, but it was there.

Our neighborhood and our outreaches have been multi-ethnic (predominately Latino), but our church has not kept up. We have seen many people desire Christ through our outreaches, but after attending our church for a while, they often moved to a church that spoke their language. Others moved away from the neighborhood and began to attend churches wherever they are living. We have seen some families of different ethnicities stay, but they stay because of the relationships we have built with them, not necessarily because the service appeals to them.

There are a few of us who have worked the outreaches faithfully. We have had our eyes opened, if only partially, to the challenges that face so many non-Caucasian Americans. There are many who have not had this privilege. They often have struggled to see and understand what is going on when discrimination is mentioned, and they often do not see the need for social justice.

We often see evangelical churches working from the Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP). According to Dr. Donald McGavran, the definition of a homogeneous unit is “a section of society in which all members have some characteristic in common.”¹ The Homogeneous Unit Principle redefined church growth strategy as defining and focusing on as specific a demographic as you can. “This principle states that it is easier for people to become Christians when they must cross few or no racial, linguistic, or class barriers.”² This strategy is also seen in Rick Warren’s book, *The Purpose Driven Church*. The way

¹ Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1970), 69.

² David Swanson, “Down with the Homogeneous Unit Principle?,” *Christianity Today*, August 2010, accessed May 10, 2017, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2010/august-online-only/down-with-homogeneous-unit-principle.html>.

to grow a church is to determine the demographic you are looking to reach and then focus on having a service that is designed for them. The goal is growing the church, and the quickest way to do that is to find one demographic you feel called to reach and focus on designing the church's outreaches and services to reach that specific demographic. By its very definition, this creates homogeneous churches. But is that what we should do?

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in a sermon at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., on March 31, 1968, said that “We must face the sad fact that at eleven o’clock on Sunday morning when we stand to sing ‘In Christ there is no East or West,’ we stand in the most segregated hour of America.”³ Unfortunately, little has changed in almost 50 years. Although the number has almost doubled, still only 14 percent of congregations are considered multiethnic, with at least 20 percent of members coming from racial groups different from the congregation’s majority race.⁴ This is in stark contrast to what we see in secular America, where desegregation has worked in our cities and in our schools to bring people of different races and socio-economic backgrounds together. But even if we are together in work and school, this does not mean that we are developing transformational relationships. Churches are places where we should be encouraged to get to know the people across the aisle. If the people in our churches look just like us, then we are only going to develop relationships with people who look just like us.

³ Martin Luther King Jr., Transcript of sermon given at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC on March 31, 1968, Accessed May, 17, 2017, http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_remaining_awake_through_a_great_revolution/.

⁴ Bob Smietana, “Research: Racial Diversity at Church More Dream than Reality,” *LifeWay Research*, January 17, 2014, accessed May 10, 2017, <http://lifewayresearch.com/2014/01/17/research-racial-diversity-at-church-more-dream-than-reality/>.

Our country is at a crossroads. Racial challenges are heating up once again. The church is called to love God and to love one another (the Greatest Commandment). As we look at Christ's church, we see division and contention instead of unity. There is a desire to maintain control, and to do things the way they have always been done. There may be fiscal challenges and attendance may be down, but there is a reluctance to compromise. And those who are segregated in their church lives are often segregated in their personal lives. Some churches would rather die than have their service changed in a way that would attract those who are not like them.

In John 17:23, Jesus prays for unity, that the world may know that the Father sent Him. Congregants today have a great opportunity to break through the walls of racism and become the united body of Christ that Jesus prayed for. But it will not happen without sacrifice, and it will not happen unless we are willing to not only seek diversity in our congregations but also to bring about diversity in our leadership (both visible and behind the scenes). Diversity in leadership is necessary if we want to see truly integrated congregations. And integrated congregations, coming together in worship, fellowship, and service, will be more apt to give those of different ethnicities the benefit of the doubt, and be more inclined to see racial inequality and injustice. And if this happens, there will be a desire to be more involved in finding solutions to these problems.

Chapter two will focus on the theological and biblical foundations regarding the call to multiethnic ministry and multiethnic leadership. This chapter will focus on issues such as the reversal of the tower of Babel, the Kingdom of God, the household of God, multiethnic leadership in the early church and leadership qualifications for the body of Christ.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

In this chapter I will discuss the theological and biblical foundations for bringing together different ethnicities in the body of Christ as they are seen in Scripture. Jesus lets us know that we should be seeking His kingdom here on earth as it is in Heaven, so we will want to look at Scripture to see what it teaches about the kingdom of Heaven. Paul (and other authors) also speaks in multiple letters about the call to unity in the body of Christ. We will also look at the call to leadership to see if there are signs of multiethnic leadership, what the scriptural expectations are for leadership, and if there is anything that should scripturally exclude anyone from leadership because of their ethnicity. By the end of this chapter, we will conclude that the church, more than any other body, should be united cross-culturally as a vision of His kingdom here on earth.

A Great Reversal

Before we begin to look at the call to unity from diversity, we need to look at when diversity started. From the beginning, we know that sin entered the world through Adam (Genesis 3, Romans 5:12), and that all have sinned and no one is righteous in and of themselves (Romans 3:9–20). Because of sin, there came the necessity to divide people. As people grew in number, so did their transgressions. As the population grew, so did their propensity for sin (Genesis 6). God sent the flood to address the wickedness of hearts that comes from a united group of sinful people, and afterward promised that He would never again destroy the world by flood. In Genesis chapter 11 we see that once again the unity of a growing number of sinful people was going to cause more issues and

they would become even more sinful. Genesis 11: 6–9 states the following: “The LORD said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.” So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel — because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth.”¹

Regarding this topic, Victor Hamilton makes note of the fact that there were different languages at the time, but there must have been a “lingua franca, a medium of communication among representatives of different speech groups.”² As humanity became increasingly more sinful, God, in His infinite wisdom, determined that it would not be best for man to be united in thought and speech. C. F. Keil writes that “God determined, by confusing their language, to prevent the heightening of sin through ungodly association, and to frustrate their design... If language is the audible expression of emotions, conceptions, and thoughts of the mind, the cause of the confusion or division of the one human language into different national dialects must be sought in an effect to produce upon the human mind, by which the original unity of emotion, conception, thought, and will was broken up. This inward unity had no doubt been already disturbed by sin, but the disturbance had not yet amounted to a perfect breach. This happened first of all in the event recorded here, through a direct manifestation of divine power, which caused the disturbance produced by sin in the unity of emotion, thought, and will to issue in a diversity of language, and thus by a miraculous suspension

¹ Gen 11:6–9, NIV. Unless specified, all scripture references are from the New International Version.

² Victor P. Hamilton, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1990), 350.

of mutual understanding frustrated the enterprise by which men hope to render dispersion and estrangement impossible.”³

Once again, sin has brought about a necessary change to humanity. Hamilton puts it this way, “The fact that God scatters the builders suggests that more than egoism is involved. Here we see the divine will agitated not only by earthlings who would essay to become deity, but also by a resistant humanity that ‘prefers the settled security of homogeneity and centralization.’”⁴ We could no longer be trusted to be of one thought and language, so humanity was divided. But that was not how we were created to be. Jesus, through His life, death, and resurrection, has begun the process of uniting creation and humanity to be as it was originally created to be. H. D. M. Spence put it this way, “1. Confusion, division, dispersion. 2. Gathering the dispersed, uniting the divided, restoring order to the confused.”⁵ So in the tower of Babel, we saw God bring about confusion, division, and dispersion. In Zion we will see a reversal of that which began at the tower of Babel.

Jesus begins this reversal. Theologically we see the beginning of this reversal in the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13). Since Jesus knows what it is like, and what it will be like in heaven, it makes sense that His prayer would be beyond the peoples’ understanding at that time. Jesus has us praying for things we have yet to see, and can barely comprehend.

³ C. F. Keil, *Commentary on the Old Testament: Volume 1 The Pentateuch* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001), 110-111.

⁴ Hamilton, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, 356 (includes a partial quote from B. W. Anderson, “Babel, Unity and Diversity in God’s Creation”).

⁵ H. D. M. Spence-Jones, *The Pulpit Commentary: Genesis* (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909). (Electronic Edition), 170.

This prayer is found in Jesus' teaching known as the Sermon on the Mount. In this prayer Jesus was teaching the right way to pray to God. From the correction in Matthew 6:5–8, Jesus lets us know that prayer had become something it was not intended to be. Prayer was not supposed to be a show, making eloquent speeches in front of the masses. Jesus is stating that prayer is something more. It is also not about telling God what you need, for He already knows. Then Jesus shares with us the expectation of how we should pray in verses 9–13, “This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’”⁶

In this prayer, we learn that prayer starts with acknowledging who God is. He is our Father. He is holy, and His name is to be praised. From there, before we get to any concerns about our welfare or the welfare of others, we are told to pray for His kingdom and His will on earth as it is in heaven. When Jesus' disciples ask Him how to pray (Luke 11:1–4), He shares a similar format which has them praying for His kingdom to come.

The Kingdom of God

According to John Nolland, we need to understand what is meant by the term “heaven.” Both Nolland and Leon Morris point out the significance of this term in the

⁶ Matt 6:9–13.

Gospel of Matthew. Louw and Nida write that βασιλεια is “an area or district ruled by a king—‘kingdom.’”⁷

The phrase “on earth as it is in heaven,” would be more literally translated “in heaven, so also on earth.” This is translating the “καὶ” as it is recommended in Louw and Nida.⁸ John Nolland recommends that we look at this phrase, “Your kingdom come,” as independently applying to all three petitions. Nolland writes “All three of the opening petitions of the Lord’s prayer could be governed by the central one (kingdom), which is clearly eschatological in focus.”⁹

In the phrase “Your kingdom come,” the verb “ελθετω” is a third person singular aorist active imperative. Daniel Wallace points out that this particular imperative would be considered a request, and “is normally seen when the speaker is addressing a superior.”¹⁰ His translation of this phrase is “Let your kingdom come.”¹¹

Leon Morris writes the following: “The prayer looks for the full realization of all that the kingdom of God means.”¹² This would be seen in the three phrases, “hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done.”¹³ We want to see His name worshiped and revered on earth as it is in heaven (completely and wholeheartedly), we want His will to be done here as it is in heaven (followed completely), and we want to see His kingdom, His domain, here on earth as it is in heaven. If, as Nolland recommends,

⁷ J.P. Louw and E.A. Nida, *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1996), Vol. 1, 15.

⁸ Fredrick William Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000) recommends this being translated as “so also” or “so” on 496.

⁹ John Nolland, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 287.

¹⁰ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 487.

¹¹ Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 488.

¹² Leon Morris, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1992), p. 145.

¹³ Matt 6:9–10.

we link the meaning of this phrase with the petitions, then it would make sense that the kingdom that is being mentioned would include a desire to see the physical representation of His kingdom on earth here in heaven.

George Eldon Ladd sees the kingdom of God as the Lord's reign, yet he mentions that some of the passages on the kingdom of God can deal with God's reign, while others refer to either his current or future realm. In focusing on this he shows how the reign of God revealed as Christ begins His ministry, yet is not fully seen since not everyone is submitting to His rule. This will be seen in the future, when eventually every knee will bow before Him. In this Ladd asks an important question: "When we pray, 'Thy Kingdom come,' are we praying for heaven to come to earth? In a sense we are praying for this; but heaven is an object of desire only because the reign of God is to be more perfectly realized than it is now. Apart from the reign of God, heaven is meaningless. Therefore, what we pray for is, 'thy kingdom come; *thy will be done* on earth as it is in heaven.'"¹⁴ He views this as coming to fruition in the church body as the fellowship of believers come together to see Christ's reign in their lives and in the life of the church.

We are requesting that God our Father would let Christ's reign (His kingdom) come on earth as it is in heaven. If we are seeking to see His kingdom come and to see His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven, then we need to see what scripture teaches about His heavenly kingdom. There are a couple of clear references to worship in heaven in the book of Revelation. John gets a look at worship in heaven and shares it in Revelation 5:9–13 as well as in Revelation 7:9–14.

¹⁴ George Eldon Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1959), 21.

In Revelation 5:9–10 John writes “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”¹⁵

In verse nine, the new song states that “with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.”¹⁶ In Greek, it is "ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς καὶ γλώσσης καὶ λαοῦ καὶ ἔθνους ." ¹⁷ According to *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, these terms mean the following: φυλῆς means “a subgroup of a nation characterized by a distinctive blood line,”¹⁸ γλώσσης, “a body of words that make up a distinctive language,”¹⁹ λαοῦ, “a body of people with common cultural bonds and ties to a specific territory,”²⁰ and ἔθνους, “a body of persons united by kinship, culture, and common traditions, nations, and people.”²¹ This makes it clear that God’s heavenly kingdom includes all ethnicities and people groups. Robert Mounce puts it this way, “Those who are purchased are from every tribe, language, people and nation. It is fruitless to attempt a distinction between these terms as ethnic, linguistic, political, and so on. The Seer is stressing the universal nature of the church and for this purpose piles up phrases for their rhetorical impact.”²²

John then goes on to write "Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They

¹⁵ Rev 5:9–10.

¹⁶ Rev 5:9.

¹⁷ Rev. 5:9, *The Greek New Testament* (27th ed., Re 5:9) (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft., 1993).

¹⁸ Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1069.

¹⁹ Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 201.

²⁰ Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 586.

²¹ Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 276.

²² Robert H. Mounce, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 136.

encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they were saying: ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!’ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: ‘To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!’” Ladd writes “This song of the twenty-four elders identifies all of the redeemed as a Kingdom.”²³ He goes on to write about unity in the body, using different examples, including the olive tree from Romans 11, to strengthen his point that there is but one people of God.

The vision that John saw, as pointed out by G.K Beale, is similar to what Daniel saw in Daniel 7:13–14, “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”²⁴ Once again we see people of different ethnicities worshiping together before the throne of God.

This unity is also seen Revelation 7:9, “After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.”²⁵ John uses the same terms that he did in chapter five. Here we see that all ethnicities will be worshiping before Him; He will provide for them and take care of them. Mounce puts it this way, “the elders, living creatures, and angels of chapters 4 and 5 are now joined with so vast a

²³ Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, 116-117.

²⁴ Dan 7:13–14.

²⁵ Rev 7:9–10.

multitude of redeemed that to number them would be impossible. In every direction they stretch out as far as the eye can see. As God promised Abraham, they are in number as the stars of heaven (Genesis 15:5) and the sand of the sea (Genesis 32:12). The universality of the multitude is stressed by the fourfold division into nations, tribes, peoples, and languages.”²⁶

These words support Genesis 12:1–3, “The LORD had said to Abram, ‘Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. ‘I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.’”²⁷ C.F. Keil suggests “Abram was not only to *receive* blessing, but to *be* a blessing; not only to be blessed by God, but to become a blessing, or the medium of blessing, to others...all the families of the earth were to be blessed in him.”²⁸ Hamilton points out that the word *goy* is used instead of *‘am*. “Whereas *‘am* refers to people or nations in terms of centripetal unity and cohesiveness, *goy* is linked with government and territory.”²⁹

Ladd would also point out that the end of the Lord’s prayer, dealing with forgiveness, is also a part of the kingdom of God and plays a part in unity of the body. “Another evidence of the life of the Kingdom is a fellowship undisturbed by ill-will and animosity. This is why Jesus had so much to say about forgiveness, for perfect forgiveness is an evidence of love.”³⁰ Ladd goes on to write about the fact that divine

²⁶ Mounce, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, 162.

²⁷ Gen 12:1–3.

²⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 123.

²⁹ Hamilton, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, 372.

³⁰ George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realm* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1959), 268.

forgiveness is a part of the Kingdom of God, and that those whose lives do not emulate forgiveness are not projecting properly the Kingdom of God as taught by Christ. A lack of forgiveness is not the only cause of ill-will and animosity. Division and the lack of ethnic unity in the body, especially combined with feelings of superiority/inferiority and a lack of concern for those in need could also be viewed as signs of the absence of the kingdom of God.

Jesus' Prayer for Unity

Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane would take this call to unity further. This would take us beyond unity as a glimpse of heaven here on earth. After beginning His prayer with an acknowledgment that He had completed all He had come to do (John 17:1–5), and praying for his disciples (John 17:6–19), Jesus prays for the unity of all believers. “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”³¹ The unity that Jesus is talking about here is unity such as is seen within the Godhead. Our unity as believers is to emulate that between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As stated in verse 23, Jesus is looking for us to be completely united.

This prayer for unity makes sense since we are to be the branches and He is the vine (John 15). However, beyond this, we are called to unity in order to be a witness that

³¹ John 17:20–23.

God the Father sent Jesus His Son. It is also a witness of God's love for us, that love that is spoken of in John 3:16–17, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”³² Morris writes that “the bond that unites believers is to be of the very closest... They already had a unity of a sort. But this unity is not regarded as being sufficient. There is to be a closer unity, a ‘perfected’ unity... the unity of believers is to impress the world.”³³ Our unity should be such that the world steps back and takes notice. D. A. Carson puts it this way, “The thought is breathtakingly extravagant. The unity of the disciples, as it approaches the perfection that is its goal (*teteleiomeno*i; *cf.* the use of this verb in 4:34; 5:36; 17:4), serves not only to convince many in the world that Christ is indeed the supreme locus of divine revelation as Christians claim (*that you sent me*), but that Christians themselves have been caught up into the love of the Father for the Son, secure and content and fulfilled because they are loved by the Almighty Himself (*cf.* Eph. 3:17b–19), with the very same love he reserves for his Son. It is hard to imagine a more compelling evangelistic appeal.”³⁴ As modern North American evangelical churches look to newer and bigger buildings, high tech programs, eloquent speakers and gifted musicians, Scripture teaches that the best evangelistic appeal that we could make would be the unity of believers that comes from truly loving one another.

This love for God and love for others is, in Jesus' opinion, the Greatest Commandment. Luke 10:27 states, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and

³² John 3:16–17.

³³ Leon Morris, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel According to John Revised* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 651.

³⁴ D. A. Carson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 569.

with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”³⁵ When the expert in the law asked, “who is my neighbor?” Jesus shared the parable of the Good Samaritan. The despised Samaritan is the one to look up to in this parable, not the priest or the Levite. Jesus is radically challenging the social construct of the time. Joel B. Green puts it this way, “In his Galilean ministry, Jesus had worked to exterminate those boundaries that predetermine human interaction; what was begun there will continue to characterize his message on the way to Jerusalem. His portrayal of a Samaritan as one who embodies the law, and whose comportment models the covenant faithfulness of God – and whose doing so stands in sharp contradistinction to the practices of temple personnel on the road – serves this wider motif as it obliterates the construction of human existence sanctioned by the religious establishment in Jerusalem.”³⁶

The religious establishment had established a hierarchy, and they were quite content with the Samaritans on the outside looking in. John Lightfoot writes, “*The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans*: that is, so as to be obliged by them for any courtesy done to them. But would this Jew, half dead, reject the kindness of the Samaritan at this time? This person being of a nation than which the Jews hated nothing more, is brought in shewing this kindness to the Jew, on purpose to give the plainer instance, *who is my neighbour*. It might seem more proper to have said, that the Samaritan acknowledged the wounded man for his *neighbour* in being so kind to him: but our Saviour intimates that he was the wounded man’s *neighbour*; thereby teaching us that

³⁵ Luke 10:27.

³⁶ Joel B. Green, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 427.

even a stranger, yea, an enemy (against the doctrine of their own schools), is no other than our *neighbour*.”³⁷

Look at this in light of 1 John 4:19–20, “We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.”³⁸ John also writes in 1 John 3:16–18 that “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”³⁹ In looking at the word used for brothers and sisters, ἀδελφός, in this context, would mean “a person viewed as a brother in terms of a close affinity, *brother, fellow member, member, associate*.”⁴⁰ In fact, Jesus said that His disciples would be defined by our love for one another. “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”⁴¹ It should be love for one another that defines us, and that love does not just apply to people who look like me, or act like me, or talk like me. It applies to the human race. As is seen above, it even applies to those who would seem to be our enemies. Jesus is bringing the house back together.

³⁷ John Lightfoot, *Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica: Volume 3* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), 108-109.

³⁸ 1 John 4:19–20.

³⁹ 1 John 3:16–18.

⁴⁰ Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 18.

⁴¹ John 13:34–35.

Breaking Down Barriers to Unity

Upon His resurrection, Jesus begins the process of restoring creation back to what it was designed to be. Because of the evil in human hearts and minds, God divided them in thought and language at the Tower of Babel. What we see in the beginning of Acts is that God is beginning the process of restoration in the area of ethnic unity through the moving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. As the Holy Spirit pours down on His people, we see a reversal of what happened at the Tower of Babel.

In the beginning of Acts chapter two, Luke records the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The sound of the Holy Spirit descending on people was like violent wind, which drew people to see what had happened. As the people came to figure out what was going on, they were amazed that they were hearing the Gospel in their own languages. It is stated that “there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.”⁴² Luke goes on to share the extent of the people groups being reached, and it is extensive.

So early on God had to confuse their speech so that they could not understand each other, and scattered them. Consequently, this brought confusion to the people who then were unable to build their own tower to reach the heavens. In Acts 2, we now see God, through the Holy Spirit, allowing people to hear and understand the Gospel in their own languages. Thus, those scattered without the ability to understand one another were now being brought back together. And now, instead of trying to build our own temple that would draw us closer to God on our own, He has now come and made His dwelling with us. He has redefined temple and kingdom, drawing us closer to the way things would have been without sin.

⁴² Acts 2:5.

We also see in Acts the resistance to step out, with that same desire from the days of Babel to stay secure in their local homogeneous setting. Through the persecution that comes through Rome, the Lord once again forces them out of their comfort zones to fulfill His purpose for them, which was to “Go and make disciples of all nations.”⁴³ Even though humanity may try to delineate along racial and ethnic boundaries, Robert Banks points out that Paul’s theology of unity begins with the fact that sin divides all people from God (Romans 3:23). Paul “describes the Christian community as uniting all (irrespective of nationality, social position, or gender) who acknowledge the death and resurrection of Christ, experience the power of the Spirit, and look forward to the coming of God’s kingdom... an individual’s national identity or heritage gives no advantage here.”⁴⁴ This call to disciple-making would bring about further changes to the body of Christ.

If we continue looking at the Book of Acts, we begin to see multiethnic leadership in action in Acts 6:5–7. “This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented them to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.”⁴⁵ Peterson has this to say about the names, “Those chosen for the role all have Greek names. This does not prove that they were all Hellenists (Greek names such as Andrew, Philip, and Bartholomew are found among the apostles), though, given the

⁴³ Matt 28:19.

⁴⁴ Robert Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community: The Early Church Houses in their Cultural Setting* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 110.

⁴⁵ Acts 6:5–7.

situation, it is likely that they were...*Nicolas*, however, is identified as being *from Antioch a convert to Judaism*.”⁴⁶ So we have at least one person at this point who is not of Jewish birth who is involved in ministry.

The Lord expands on this in Acts 10:34–11:18. Here we see that Peter’s eyes opened to the reality that the Lord loves and cares for everyone. Although he had followed Jesus since the beginning of His ministry, God needed to give Peter a vision in Joppa to open his eyes to the reality of the coming kingdom. In 11:15–17, Peter explains his viewpoint, “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?”⁴⁷ The Gentiles were given the gift of the Holy Spirit... they are now brothers and sisters in Christ! The Jewish Christians needed to treat them as brothers and sisters in Christ. Later, at the council at Jerusalem, this dispute continued. Paul and Barnabas spoke of the “signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them.”⁴⁸ James also shared from Amos 9:11–12, about “rebuilding David’s fallen tent... I will restore it, that the rest of humanity may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who bear my name.”⁴⁹ The determination was that Gentile Christians did not have to become Jewish in order to become followers of Jesus. The body of Christ is made up of both Jews and Gentiles (a title that described anyone who was not of Jewish ethnicity).

⁴⁶ David G. Peterson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2009), 234.

⁴⁷ Acts 11:15–17.

⁴⁸ Acts 15:12.

⁴⁹ Acts 15:16–17.

Paul would expand on this in passages in Galatians and Colossians. In Galatians 3:26–29, he writes “So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”⁵⁰ He states something similar in Colossians 3:11, “Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.”⁵¹ God is letting us know that because of Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross, we should not divide the body due to ethnicity or appearance.

Paul’s letter to the Ephesians offers us a great visual image of what Jesus did. Ephesians 2:14–18 states that “For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.”⁵²

That is the kind of unity in the body that is expected. It is for those who are far away, and those who are near. John R. W. Stott, in his commentary on Ephesians, speaks about the significance of the special relations discussed in this passage, “Such spacial language (‘far’ and ‘near’) was not uncommon in the Old Testament. God and Israel were known to be ‘near’ one another, since God had promised to be their God and to

⁵⁰ Gal 3:26–29.

⁵¹ Col 3:11.

⁵² Eph 2:14–18.

make them his people. Hence Moses could say: ‘What great nation is there that has a God so *near* to it as the Lord our God is to us?... by contrast, the Gentile nations were ‘far off’, peoples who had to be summoned ‘from afar’. But God promised that one day he would speak ‘Peace, peace, to the far and to the near’, a promise which was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.”⁵³

This division, this separation, was clearly delineated and would have been understood to those who had been to the Temple in Jerusalem and had seen the wall that separated the court of the Gentiles from the court of Israel. He has broken down the divider, the barrier between us. This would enable them to worship together, instead of having the Gentile Christians worshiping from the other side of a wall. Therefore, we would be seen as one humanity, not two, as Paul is pointing out in this passage. Arthur G. Patzia puts it this way, “There is more here than simply the union or the mixture of two groups. This is not the case of the Greeks conquering the Jews or the Jews converting the Greeks to their faith and way of life. Rather, it is a completely new creation (**one new man**) that Christ has effected in union with himself.”⁵⁴

Paul ends this pericope with more images of unity in Ephesians 2:19–22, “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is

⁵³ John R. W. Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today: The Message of Ephesians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 97.

⁵⁴ Arthur G. Patzia, *New International Biblical Commentary – Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 196.

joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”⁵⁵

We start by hearing that Gentiles are no longer foreigners, but they are now fellow citizens in the kingdom of God. Commenting on this, Stott states “The kingdom of God is neither a territorial jurisdiction nor even a spiritual structure. God’s kingdom is God himself ruling his people, and bestowing upon them all the privileges and responsibilities which his rule implies. To this new international God-ruled community, which had replaced the Old Testament national theocracy, Gentiles and Jews belonged on equal terms... he sees this other kingdom, neither Jewish nor Roman but international and interracial, as something more splendid and more enduring than any earthly empire.”⁵⁶ This sounds a lot like the image of the kingdom of God that was spoken of when referring to Revelation 5:9–13 and 7:9–10.

So Paul is speaking about the now, desiring to get a glimpse of heaven here on earth as it comes to worship with everyone worshiping together and feeling equal. It is important to note that in stating this, since his background was being a Jew, he was elevating everyone onto a plane that he and his ancestors were on. But I believe that Paul had come to understand that he was first and foremost a child of God and a part of His kingdom before his Jewish heritage. He had put aside his Jewish heritage understanding that everything changed when Jesus called him on that Damascus Road.⁵⁷ This is how he could say in 1 Corinthians 9:19–22, “Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself

⁵⁵ Eph 2:19–22.

⁵⁶ Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today*, 105.

⁵⁷ Acts 9:1–9.

am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some."⁵⁸ He sets aside his Jewish heritage (to the Jews I became like a Jew) because his identity is with Christ. Why would he need to become like a Jew, as he was of Jewish descent, unless he no longer recognized that distinction?

The Household of God

Paul says that we are no longer strangers but members of His household. He writes in Ephesians 1:4–5 that “In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.”⁵⁹ We have been adopted, and we are no longer outsiders but members of His family. Stott writes that “here his emphasis seems to be less on God's fatherhood than on the brotherhood into which, across racial barriers, the Father's children are brought. ‘Brethren’ (meaning ‘brothers and sisters’) is the commonest word for Christians in the New Testament. It expresses a close relationship of affection, care and support.”⁶⁰ As siblings in God's household, we should show concern for one another and come alongside one another... we should ‘love one another.’

Banks speaks of the centrality of love in a community that is seeking to be like a loving family (as Paul has described us to be). And this is not just any love, but love as

⁵⁸ 1 Cor 9:19–22.

⁵⁹ Eph 1:4–6.

⁶⁰ Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today*, 106.

presented in 1 Corinthians 13. Banks points out that even sacrifice is worthless unless it is motivated by love. Banks points out that the solidarity of the body of Christ “goes beyond mere sociality, for each is inextricably involved in the life of the other.”⁶¹

His final image is one of a house being built together. His focus is on the fact that this building is being built on the teaching of the apostles and prophets with Jesus as the chief cornerstone. In Him the whole building is joined together, Jew and Gentile, rising to become a holy temple in the Lord. ναὸν ἅγιον is used for holy temple, and these words are in the singular, not the plural, leading us to understand that the holy temple we are being built into is not a bunch of temples (or churches), but a singular one. It is a picture of unity! F. F. Bruce describes it this way, “If the apostles and prophets were the foundation members of this living sanctuary and other Jewish believers were among the earliest ‘stones’ built into its fabric, the situation now was that Gentile believers (‘you too’) were being added to the structure, in constantly increasing numbers. The new community, God’s fellowship of reconciliation, transcends all distinctions of race, status, and sex...No privilege is bestowed on the people of God in which Gentiles do not enjoy an equal share.”⁶² Stott makes a similar comment when he writes that “it may be that Paul is using this imagery to set Christ forth as the key to Jewish-Gentile solidarity.”⁶³

Paul continues on this theme of unity in chapters 3 and 4. In Ephesians 3:4–6, Paul states that “In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that

⁶¹ Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community*, 54.

⁶² F. F. Bruce, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), 307.

⁶³ Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today*, 108-109.

through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.”⁶⁴ Wallace looks at Ephesians 3:5 from a grammatical standpoint as stating that “it has now been revealed... that the Gentiles are **fellow-heirs** and **fellow body-members** and **fellow-sharers**”⁶⁵ together in the promise in Jesus Christ. Ephesians 4:3–6 also focuses on unity. Paul uses three different words to speak of the unity that Gentiles share with Jews in Christ Jesus. First, Gentiles are inheriting together (co-heirs) the promise.⁶⁶ Next, Gentiles are “belonging to the same body.”⁶⁷ And finally, we are “having a share with another in some possession or relationship.”⁶⁸ From a theological standpoint, this is making the Gentiles now something they were not before, and it has now been revealed that through Christ they are united together. Gentiles are no longer the forgotten stepchildren, but brothers and sisters in Christ.

In Ephesians 4:3–6, Paul shares that we are to “Make every effort to keep the unity (see also Romans 15:5) of the Spirit through the bond of peace (see also Colossians 3:15). There is one body (see also Romans 12:5) and one Spirit (see also 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 2:18), just as you were called to one hope when you were called (see also Romans 8:28); one Lord (see also 1 Corinthians 8:6), one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all (see also Deuteronomy 6:4; Zechariah 14:9), who is over all and through all and in all (see also Romans 11:36).”⁶⁹ This passage on unity could not have been written any clearer. Paul makes it clear that there is to be one united body of Christ.

⁶⁴ Eph 3:4-6.

⁶⁵ Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 192.

⁶⁶ Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 952.

⁶⁷ Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 978.

⁶⁸ Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 958.

⁶⁹ Eph 4:3–6 (also ties references in this passage).

Ephesians is a treatise on the reality that Jesus broke down the ethnic barriers that separated the Jewish Christians from the Gentile Christians, but it can be seen in the attached passages that the call to unity in the body is seen throughout the New Testament. Stott puts this wonderfully when he states that “We must assert that there *can* be only one Christian family, only one Christian faith, hope and baptism, and only one Christian body, because there is only one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You can no more multiply churches than you can multiply Gods. Is there only one God? Then he has only one church. Is the unity of God inviolable? Then so is the unity of the church. The unity of the church is as indestructible as the unity of God himself. It is no more possible to split the church than it is possible to split the Godhead.”⁷⁰ Stott recognizes after this that humanity has done what supposedly cannot be done, but sees “the church’s disunity as a visible appearance which contradicts the invisible reality.”⁷¹ Paul recognized the challenge when he told them to “Make every effort to keep the unity.”⁷² Stott, therefore, asserts that “to maintain the church's unity must mean to maintain it visibly.”⁷³ This call to visible unity, in the context of the book of Ephesians, points to a visibly united cross-cultural, multiethnic church.

Even though the call to unity can be seen throughout the New Testament, it was a difficult concept to grasp for those who had lived separated and consecrated for so long. Peter struggled with this. Yet even after the counsel in Jerusalem (see Acts 15), the dispute would continue on, as many of Paul's writings deal with the conflict between

⁷⁰ Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today*, 151.

⁷¹ Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today*, 152.

⁷² Eph 4:3.

⁷³ Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today*, 152.

Jewish and Gentile believers.⁷⁴ At one point, while Peter is in Antioch, after spending time eating with Gentiles, he began to withdraw. There is dispute as to whether this is before or after the Council in Jerusalem, but would have been after his vision in Acts 10 and 11. The significance of this is that he should have known better, but whatever message James sent to him caused him to withdraw from eating with the Gentile believers.

This, in turn, caused the rest of the Jewish Christians, including Barnabas, to begin to withdraw from eating with Gentiles as well. Ronald Y. K. Fung writes “The serious public consequences of Peter's conduct – which ‘would make a divided Church inevitable or a united Church impossible,’”⁷⁵ is something Paul wanted to avoid. His expectation was that there would be one united multiethnic church, and what Peter was doing had the potential to destroy the fellowship Paul had worked so hard to foster. Because of this, Paul had to stand up to Peter, not only because of the damage it could do to newer Gentile Christians, but because it could very well divide a united church.

Jesus speaks about the consequences of a disjointed house in Matthew 12:25, where He is dealing with the Pharisees saying that Jesus is casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub (Satan), therefore dividing his kingdom. Just as Jesus has used this example to make the point that a kingdom divided against itself can not stand, it would stand to reason that the kingdom of heaven cannot stand if it is divided against itself. This makes Jesus’ prayer for unity so much more important, as He understands the importance of a united kingdom.

⁷⁴ As seen in Galatians 2, Ephesians 2, and Colossians 3.

⁷⁵ Ronald Y. K. Fung, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1988), 111 (includes quote from W. Neill *The letter of Paul to the Galatians*, Cambridge: CBC; Cambridge, 1967), 41.

In our individualistic society, people desire for things to be the way they want them to be, and gravitate towards places of worship where people have the same tastes as us, who worship in a way we desire. We look to get together with like-minded people. We are called, however, to be like-minded and humble, putting others before ourselves. Paul puts it this way in Philippians 2:1–5, “Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”⁷⁶

A part of the call for unity here is to be like-minded, not to find like-minded people to be with. Paul implies that they are not being like-minded, and that the unity that they shared is beginning to break down. The call here is to be willing to put others before yourself, looking to other people’s interests first. It is a call to sacrifice, just as Jesus sacrificed everything for us (Philippians 2:6–11). Yet this is not the call of a disciple. Jesus calls the disciple to sacrifice and to deny oneself for His causes (Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). We have a call to multiethnic unity, and we are called to sacrifice and deny ourselves to the cause of Christ.

Diverse Leadership

So if we are called to be united across races and ethnicities, how does that affect our leadership structure? In Acts 13 we get to see a picture of what diverse leadership

⁷⁶ Phil 2:1–5.

looks like in a place called Antioch. Acts 13:1 states, “Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.”⁷⁷ Commentaries⁷⁸ on this passage say quite a bit about the diversity seen in the men mentioned in this passage.

“Simeon’s surname ‘Niger’ was a very respectable and common Roman name; he may be a Roman citizen, although this is not clear – the name was also used by Jews and here is a *nickname*. Nicknames were common and usually significant in antiquity; the meaning of Simeon’s Latin nickname suggests a dark complexion and may indicate that he was descended from “proselytes from the Romanized coast of North Africa (perhaps also Lucius). Cyrene, on the North African coast, had a large Jewish population. That Manaen was ‘brought up’ with Herod may mean they had the same wet nurse. Slaves who grew up in the master’s household with the son who would inherit them were often freed by the son, who had been their companion at play; even as slaves they were powerful because of their relationship to the owner.”⁷⁹

Lloyd Ogilvie writes this about the diversity spoken about. “Barnabas, who had the rich background of the infant church in Jerusalem from Pentecost or shortly thereafter; Simeon, also called Niger, a Latin name showing two strong cultures in one person; Lucius of Cyrene, also a Latin name, clearly identified as coming from North Africa; Manaen, who had been raised (*Suntrophes*) in the court of Herod the tetrarch (that is, the court of Herod Antipas, father of Agrippa); and Saul, the converted Pharisee. It

⁷⁷ Acts 13:1.

⁷⁸ Peterson’s *Acts of the Apostles*, Keener’s *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, and Bruce’s *The book of the Acts*.

⁷⁹ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary – New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 357.

was a world fellowship to start a world movement.”⁸⁰ This diversity is also recognized by Peterson, “What is most obvious is the ethnic diversity of the leadership of this church... the remarkable diversity of the backgrounds and origins of these leaders was ‘appropriate to the cosmopolitan context of Antioch.’”⁸¹ It is interesting that Jesus prayed for unity that “the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me,”⁸² and this diverse, united church was where disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:26).

In speaking about the church in Antioch when looking at the theology of Acts, David Peterson offers the following, “The church at Antioch has a significant role in Luke’s narrative, being presented as something of a model. Founded by unnamed believers who were ‘scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed’, it was nurtured by the outstanding ministries of Barnabas and Saul (11:19–26). Jews and Gentiles were united for the first time in the fellowship at Antioch, with no apparent tension or difficulties.”⁸³

So in Antioch, we see diverse leadership, and we know that the Antioch church was considered a model church. As we conclude this chapter, we should look at scriptural references on biblical leadership to see if there is anything to preclude one ethnicity or another from being leaders in a church. These can be found in 1 Timothy 3:1–13 and Titus 1:6–9. In Paul’s writing to Titus we see Titus 1:6–9 states, “An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer manages God’s household,

⁸⁰ Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *The Preacher’s Commentary – Acts* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983), 205.

⁸¹ Peterson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Acts of the Apostles*, 374-375.

⁸² John 17:23.

⁸³ Peterson, *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Acts of the Apostles*, 95-96.

he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.”⁸⁴ Of importance is that your life is in line with Christian principles (as stated in the passage) and that there be an understanding of sound doctrine. Nothing in this passage deals even remotely with race or ethnicity.

First Timothy three also deals with the expectations if someone is to be considered for leadership in the church. This list is a slightly more extensive, although still not exhaustive, list of signs that should be seen in a potential leader’s life, as well as things which would preclude someone from leadership. Again, nothing in this passage would preclude someone from a different race or ethnicity from leadership in a church. With all of Paul’s references to ministry to the Gentiles, not once does he look to exclude a Gentile from leadership just because he is not Jewish.

The call to leadership in the church is a call to be servant leaders. We see this in the Gospel of Matthew. At a time when the disciples desired power, and James and John’s mother requests for her sons to be prominent as His top disciples, Matthew 20:25–28 states that “Jesus called them together and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’”⁸⁵ Jesus emulated this

⁸⁴ Titus 1:6–9.

⁸⁵ Matt 20:25–28.

when He washed the disciples' feet. They all were qualified being called by the Lord, but in that, they were called to lift one another up. Our goal, if it were, as leaders in Christian environment, should be to move people up in prominence. As we move further to the bottom, we are moving closer to the top (counter-cultural). Therefore, looking at passages such as the ones just mentioned (in 1 Timothy, Titus, and Matthew), we should be looking for anyone in the body of Christ whom we can move into leadership, without bias to race or ethnicity, if we desire to be more Christ-like.

These passages show a renewal of unity in the body, from the consequences of sin that brought about the Tower of Babel to the Spirit-guided reuniting of language on the day of Pentecost, that God Himself began the process of reuniting in Christ that which He had divided. We see Jesus' call to cross-cultural unity in worship as we seek to see a glimpse of His kingdom here on earth. This call to unity is not just a call to invite others to the fringe, but to invite them as brothers and sisters into fellowship with the full benefits of the kingdom at their disposal.

This call to multiethnic unity is also a call to sacrifice and deny ourselves to the cause of Christ. Just as there are no racial or ethnic exclusions to membership in the body of Christ, we find no racial or ethnic exclusions to leadership. In fact, as we look to put others before us as servant leaders, we should naturally see an increase in multiethnic leadership if we are partnering with God in building a church that is representative of what we will see in heaven. And as we become more united, sacrificing our comforts for the benefit of others, we will see a unity of the body that will help the world know that the Father sent the Son, and that the Father loves them.

The focus of the next chapter will be to examine literature to get a better understanding of the past and present causes of the divided (monoethnic) church and the call to Christian unity. This chapter will also discuss the necessity of cultural intelligence and the challenges that face congregations that desire to be multiethnic (such as trust issues and the potential for conflict). It will also look at the necessity for diverse leadership in light of the challenges that are raised in this chapter.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

The last chapter discussed the issue of cross-cultural unity from a biblical and theological perspective, and what was seen is that the church is called to be united (“on earth as it is in heaven”), without any racial or ethnic prerequisites for ministry. The goal of this chapter is a review of relevant literature as to why churches are divided racially and ethnically (specifically in the United States), as well as looking to see what literature has to say about racial and ethnic integration in the body of Christ. We will begin by looking at racism and the divided church.

Racism and the Divided Church

The idea of there being different races of human beings is false. There is only one race, the human race. Ellis Cashmore writes, “Over the last forty to fifty years, however, it became increasingly clear that no meaningful taxonomy of human races was possible...(however) ‘race’ can mean a group of people who are *socially* defined in a given society as belonging together because of *physical markers* such as skin pigmentation, hair texture, facial features, stature, and the like.”¹ Any use of the term “race” must be framed this way.

A review of American history books shows that the church was divided early on due to slavery. According to Henry H. Mitchell, the Great Awakenings made a major impact in African-American conversion to Christianity. As these new converts started going to church, especially in light of the expressive style of worship that brought about

¹ Ellis Cashmore, *Dictionary of Race and Ethnic Relations* (London: Routledge, 1995), 266-267.

conversions, there were some logistical issues that needed to be dealt with. As churches began to be flooded with converts, space became an issue. This meant that there were congregations that had an overwhelming majority of “non-voting black members.”² Robert Ryland, known as a sympathetic white pastor of an African Baptist Church, pointed out that there was a necessity for permanent separation (due to the differences in worship and the needs being addressed by the preaching).

Mitchell gets into some of these challenges when he writes “it is important to be clear about the basis for division. It was not just plain and simple racial antipathy or prejudice. It was also the differences in the three ‘c’s’ of class, culture, and control.”³

During this period of history, whites welcomed and used black members, especially those who were lower in class. As whites began to move up the social ladder, they became uncomfortable worshipping with their African brothers and sisters who at that time were considered low-class. They also had different styles of worship, which came from cultural differences between those of European and African descent. James H. Evans, Jr. points out that these cultural differences come from “common history, common values, and common political aims.”⁴ And the issue of control remains an issue to this day.

Because of this disparity, both sides desired separation and independence. This is especially true in light of the fact that whites were unwilling to give black members voting rights. But beyond the issue of control, the church (along with the family) also served as a haven and refuge in the black community (according to Evans). “In the

² Henry H. Mitchell, *Black Church Beginnings: The Long-Hidden Realities of the First Years* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004), 46.

³ Mitchell, *Black Church Beginnings*, 51.

⁴ James H. Evans, Jr., *We Have Been Believers: An African-American Systematic Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 131.

midst of oppression, both the church and the family, as forms of institutional life, can serve as bulwarks against the outside world.”⁵ This would bring understanding to the importance of the separation for black Christians.

And the issues that caused separation and independence did not get better after the Civil War. Although the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves, it did nothing to deter the hostility between blacks and whites. Kenneth Scott Latourette writes that “The overwhelming majority of the Negro Membership was in denominations and congregations entirely under Negro control. This situation emerged in the early nineteenth century when African Americans were treated as second class in many congregations. Although with some encouragement by the whites, this was primarily by the choice of the Negroes themselves. Their churches were almost the only institutions in which they were fully independent of the white men. They were the Negroes’ own.”⁶ Finally African Americans had control. They had a place where they could develop, become leaders, and have a say on all aspects of the church – from worship to church life. On a side note, Mitchell points out that the issue of control wasn’t just a race issue. Richard Allen and Peter Spencer had structural differences regarding the start of a new denomination (African Methodist Episcopal) which brought about the start of two different denominations.⁷

The separation of black and white Christians did not get better when the government approved segregation. Justo L. Gonzalez notes that “In 1892, the Supreme Court approved segregation, as long as blacks were treated as ‘separate, but equal.’ Then

⁵ Evans, Jr., *We Have Been Believers*, 130.

⁶ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity: Reformation to the Present* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 1251.

⁷ Mitchell, *Black Church Beginnings*, 102-103.

the long series of ‘Jim Crow laws’ ensued, effectively excluding blacks from public places, from the right to vote, from good public education, and so forth. Meanwhile, southern white churches continued their racist teachings and practices. Blacks who had formerly attended such churches as slaves were now encouraged to leave them, and this in turn gave rise to various black denominations.”⁸ During this time, there was nothing done to repair race relations between black Christians and white Christians, and the church stayed divided.

In 1964, Congress passed a Civil Rights Act, “that outlaws discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. It prohibited unequal application of voter registration requirements, racial segregation in schools, employment, and public accommodations.”⁹ Yet four years later, Martin Luther King Jr. called 11 AM on Sunday the most segregated hour of the week.¹⁰ Since that time there has been forced integration in many areas of society, and with the desegregation of schools and the workplace there is more diversity in America than ever before.

The issue of segregation in churches has not just happened between black and white. Immigrant churches also find challenges when they try to hold on to language and culture with second-generation and third-generation American children of immigrants. Jaweed Kaleem focuses on the challenge that mono-ethnic immigrant churches face when trying to connect with second- and third-generation family members who desire to speak English and integrate into modern American culture. Kaleem writes that “While it’s

⁸ Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Present Day – Volume Two* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2006), 252.

⁹ “Civil Rights Act of 1964,” Wikipedia, last modified March 27, 2018, accessed January 8, 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_Rights_Act_of_1964.

¹⁰ Martin Luther King Jr., Transcript of sermon given at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC on March 31, 1968, Accessed May 17, 2017, http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_remaining_awake_through_a_great_revolution/.

become common wisdom that English-speaking churches will shrink as younger generations, who are typically less religious, become the majority, the Spanish church — known across denominations for its religious fervor — is battling to keep its youth in the faith. It is having to budge on one of its biggest points of pride and identity, its language, to hold on to them.”¹¹ This was seen at the Elm Street Community Church, which was originally a Finnish immigrant church. One of the older members shared in many meetings over changes to music and other aspects of worship that she did not personally like the changes, but that she understood the need to change. It was shared that the congregation, reluctant to change the service to English, or even to have an English option, caused a generation to leave and move to other churches.

Kaleem also speaks about the change that happens when going to different ethnic churches, naming Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Columbian, and Venezuelan churches as a few that are dealing with these challenges. As a Caucasian American, I have been told by multiple people who would be considered Latino that the term “Latino/a,” is a broad term speaking of multiple sub-cultures. When discussing the concept of a multiethnic church with the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries, he shared that many Latino churches are segregated by culture. So you might find a Dominican church located near a Puerto Rican church, and they might have no contact with each other. Pablo Jimenez confirms this when he writes “‘Hispanic’ congregations divide according to the regions or countries that the majority of their parishioners consider as their ‘homeland.’ For example, there are Caribbean, Central American or

¹¹ Jaweed Kaleem, “Hispanic Churches, Hispanically Spanish-Speaking, Adopt More English To Appeal To U.S.-Born Latinos,” last modified December 6, 2017, accessed January 10, 2018, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/26/hispanic-churches-latinos-spanish-english-language_n_2333178.html.

South American congregations, or local Churches that are mostly Puerto Rican, Mexican or Guatemalan.”¹² Jimenez also acknowledges that this is a challenge for Asian American churches.

Race and ethnicity are not the only things dividing the church. Jennifer Powell McNutt, in her article on the five-hundredth anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, discussed the forty-five thousand denominations that are currently recognized. Powell quotes Luther saying to Zwingli “Let us look to the future! If we cannot agree on everything, we can still enter into fellowship.”¹³ McNutt argues that division is not always bad. But is it good or healthy for the body of Christ, especially if congregations are not in fellowship? It is one thing to contextualize the Gospel, but what happens when the Gospel divides and breeds hostility between groups that are supposed to be defined by love?

Ethnic Division and the Homogeneous Unit Principle

Smith and Emerson also make the statement about the Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP) “Something is wrong at the root of American evangelicalism. I believe we have lost the gospel—God’s reconciling power, which is unique to Christianity—and have substituted church growth. We have learned how to reproduce the church without the message.”¹⁴ Donald McGavran and C. Peter Wagner have been key figures in the church growth movement, especially concerning their promotion of the Homogeneous Unit Principle.

¹² Pablo Jimenez, *Models of Intercultural Ministry*, unpublished manuscript supplied by author.

¹³ Jennifer Powell McNutt, “Division is not Necessarily Scandal: What to Think of the 45,000 Denominations that Rose from the Reformation,” *Christianity Today*, January/February, 2017.

¹⁴ Christian Smith and Michael O. Emerson, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1149-1152, Kindle.

McGavran describes the Homogeneous Unit Principle as applying to “a section of society in which all members have some characteristic in common.”¹⁵ This is an oversimplification of their view and the driving force behind this principle. In looking at the theological considerations behind his views towards church growth, McGavran states that seeking is not enough. “Church growth follows where Christians show faithfulness in finding the lost. It is not enough to search for lost sheep. The master Shepherd is not pleased with a token search, he wants his sheep found. The purpose is not to search, but to find.”¹⁶ McGavran has a passion for the Great Commission, and this requires committed Christians. Having been a missionary, it has been his understanding through research (mostly in the missions’ field), that culture is a significant factor in the redemptive process. “PEOPLE LIKE TO become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers.”¹⁷ His desire is to win people to Christ, whereas church unity is not as critical. This creates a priority to be involved in church planting, with there being multiple churches reaching different cultures. In fact, McGavran would potentially see multiethnic ministry as a hindrance to promoting kingdom growth. “Even if they were to believe on Jesus Christ and be welcomed in that congregation, converts from these and other ethnic units would rarely feel at home. Those who come for one service ordinarily do not return next Sunday. If they join the church, they more often than not drop out after a few months.”¹⁸

¹⁵ Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism, *The Pasadena Consultation: Homogeneous Principle* Copyright 1978, accessed January 10, 2018, <https://www.lausanne.org/content/lop/lop1>.

¹⁶ Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1990), 6.

¹⁷ McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 163.

¹⁸ McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 47.

In fact, Wagner would argue that groups that appear to be diverse are often homogeneous. “In my study of Circle Church, Chicago, for example, I found that although there was an obvious mixture of black, white, and yellow races in the church, the members were typically intellectuals... Such a group church, however, may still be a homogeneous unit church in the precise sense of the term.”¹⁹ It is clear that Wagner has a broad view of homogeneity. This could be seen as the difference between a church being multiethnic and a church being multicultural. It is easier for a church to be multiethnic, because people of different ethnicities can have similar thoughts on language and cultural beliefs even if they come from different places and look different. To be multicultural requires a blending of different cultures, a much greater challenge in a church setting. The fact that Wagner thinks that homogeneous churches are growing, and that heterogeneous church growth is more the exception to the rule could be, in a sense, a self-fulfilling prophecy as some of the principal leaders in the field of church growth stated was the case, and churches focused on it as a way to grow.

The Homogeneous Unit Principle may be great in theory. Rick Warren is one author who has promoted this as a way to build a church, making it the focus of part three of his book. He writes “Because human beings are so different, no single church can possibly reach everyone. That’s why we need all kinds of churches.”²⁰ Determine your target audience, determine whom you are best qualified to reach, and then find out what will connect them to church. Design the church to meet their needs and desires.

Different cultures like their services the way they have always been (usually different for

¹⁹ C. Peter Wagner, *Our Kind of People: The Ethical Dimensions of Church Growth in America* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1979), 14-15.

²⁰ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven® Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 156.

black, white, Latino, etc.), so people go where they are comfortable. They may not knowingly exclude someone from another ethnicity, but things are set up in a way that is comfortable for those from the majority. The Homogeneous Unit Principle is easier to institute, but where does it say scripturally that ministry is supposed to be easy? It is supposed to be transformational! This is particularly problematic when experiments show that even if people are randomly brought together, “people show favoritism to ingroup members... The net result – preferential treatment for the ingroup.”²¹

Yet McGavran and Wagner both acknowledged the challenges to the Homogeneous Unit Principle. Wagner stated that homogeneous congregations are a challenge to Christian social ethics; McGavran stated that not evangelizing people of different ethnicities was displeasing to God. Wagner sees two options for congregations: to either be homogeneous and more effective in evangelization, or to be diverse and focus on being socially relevant while severely sacrificing evangelism for social justice. But just because congregations are primarily homogeneous does not mean that they should be. When looking at this issue, has there been adequate study on the effect that diverse leadership has on evangelism, where linguistic, racial and cultural differences are represented in leadership? This would allow people to be evangelized by like people while still being united as the body.

Using the example of residential racial segregation, Smith and Emerson write that many Americans would disagree with segregation that is legally instituted. Yet many of those same Americans perpetuate residential segregation by living in communities where the majority of the people around them look just like them. This reflects the Homogeneous Unit Principle.

²¹ Smith and Emerson, *Divided by Faith*, 3226, Kindle.

Along these lines, Smith and Emerson write that people often look to those they know when they need someone to work for them. If whites are in the majority, especially when it comes to management and white-collar positions, they will fill other positions with people they know and trust – people who look like them. Unless there is a purposeful decision to become cross-cultural, then greater opportunities will come to those of a specific ethnic group (even if it is unintentional). The understanding is that “racial practices that reproduce racial division are covert, are embedded in normal operations of institutions, avoid direct racial terminology, and are invisible to whites.”²²

Soong-Chan Rah also challenges the church growth movement, especially the Homogeneous Unit Principle, by looking at Acts 2 in a different way. “But what if Acts 2:41 serves as a bridge between Peter’s sermon and the life of the church as described in Acts 2:42-47? Or what if Acts 2:41 actually belongs structurally to the last section of Acts 2 rather than the first section of Acts 2? If we examine Acts 2:41-47 as one unit, a structure emerges for these verses that points to another explanation for the growth of the church.”²³ When looking at it in Chiastic form focused on Acts 2:41-47, the focal point changes from preaching to sacrificial living. This is the exact opposite of the Homogeneous Unit Principle.

Whether intentional or not, racism, or what Emerson and Smith would call “racialization,” has continued to exist since the Civil Rights’ Movement of the 1950’s and 1960’s. If nothing is being done to break down barriers that separate people of different ethnicities by striving to be deliberately cross-cultural, the natural consequence will continue to breed racialization. Income disparities show that racialization has led to

²² Smith and Emerson, *Divided by Faith*, 235, Kindle.

²³ Soong-Chan Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 1757-1759, Kindle.

financial oppression. According to the census bureau, the real median household incomes by race and origin of householder from 1967-2013 are the following: Asian \$63,000-\$67,000; Non-Hispanic Whites \$51,000-\$58,000; Hispanic - any race \$38,000-\$41,000; and Blacks \$26,000-\$34,000.²⁴ The gap is almost identical for the groups between 1967 and 2013, meaning that the level of inequality is not diminishing.

The New Jim Crow and Modern Day Racial Conflict

Is it possible that Jim Crow segregation is still in existence? Is black genocide going on? Michelle Alexander argues “that mass incarceration is, metaphorically, the New Jim Crow and that all those who care about social justice should fully commit themselves to dismantling this new racial caste system.”²⁵ Although her book starts with the accusation that the CIA funneled drugs into the inner cities in order to, in a sense, bring genocide specifically to African American young adults, a view that connects some pretty far reaching dots, her statement that African Americans are being incarcerated at a much higher rate than Caucasians is supported by fact.

It is also true that for those who have been incarcerated, life will forever be changed. Job opportunities are limited enough. But if you have been incarcerated, it can be almost impossible to find a job, and that job probably is not paying much. This changes your options for housing opportunities. Poverty is almost a given, and many feel trapped and make poor choices to try and survive. This often leads to further incarceration.

²⁴ U. S. Census Bureau, “Households by Total Money Income, Race, and Hispanic Origin of Householder: 1967-2013,” *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2013*, accessed January 10, 2018. <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/demo/tables/p60/249/tablea1.pdf>.

²⁵ Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow* (New York, NY: The New Press, 2012), 11, Kindle.

Along these lines, some think that the targeting of African Americans by the placement of abortion clinics in the inner-cities is part of planned Black genocide because of the increased rate of abortions to people of color as opposed to those who are not.²⁶ In fact, PBS's "Frontline" aired this story to highlight what is going on. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, non-Hispanic white women had the lowest abortion rate of 7.2 abortions per 1000, and non-Hispanic black women had the highest at 27.0 abortions per 1000.²⁷ That is a rate that is almost quadruple the number of white children being aborted. According to the website blackgenocide.com, there have been 16 million black children aborted between 1973 and 2012, which has caused a 44% drop in what could have been the African American population in America.²⁸

There are, of course, significant questions raised by this data. First, if Black genocide is going on, then why is there no public outcry for it to stop? If these are indeed ways to implement a new form of Jim Crow, then how much better are things than fifty years ago when the Civil Rights movement was at its peak? There are problems on both sides of the political aisle. A couple of key political arguments are pro-life versus pro-choice, and the differences between the views of personal or corporate responsibility for those struggling with poverty. The Democratic Party is pro-choice (pro-abortion) and sees corporate responsibility for those struggling in poverty situations. The Republican Party is pro-life (against abortion) but often is too intent to point out personal responsibility for someone who finds herself in desperate circumstances. For the

²⁶ Clenard Childress, Jr., "Black Genocide," 2012, accessed January 10, 2018, www.blackgenocide.org/black.html.

²⁷ TC Jatlaoui, A Ewing, MG Mandel, et al, "Abortion Surveillance – United States," 2013, *MMWR Surveill Summ* 2016;65 (No. SS-12):1—4, DOI: accessed January 10, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss6512a1>.

²⁸ The forty-four percent drop comes from an actual population of thirty-six million instead of the 52 million potential if the abortions hadn't taken place.

Christian, the right to life should be important both in the womb and outside of it. Those with malicious intent can use both sides to their advantage. An example of this would be someone who behind the scenes is pro-life, yet believes in personal responsibility and does nothing to assist those who made the choice to bring a life into this world. A person could use these views to continue the cycle of poverty, bringing about a different oppression that is eerily similar to Civil Rights era oppression.

It is not just people with malicious intent who are keeping racial divisions alive. Smith and Michael write that, “well-intentioned people, their values, and their institutions actually recreate racial divisions and inequalities they ostensibly oppose. It is a narrative of how some of America’s core values and assumptions and its reliance on market principles contradict and work against other esteemed values.”²⁹ This can be seen in the American church, where the free market system perpetuates segregation that has never gone away in mainstream Christian society. With a desire for church growth using the Homogeneous Unit Principle, the church has perpetuated segregation in the name of evangelism.

Smith and Emerson write about the difference between racism (which many people today would disagree with) and racialization. “Racism is often captured best in people’s minds by the ideology and actions of the Ku Klux Klan: an overt doctrine of racial superiority—usually labeled prejudice—that leads to discrimination.”³⁰ They describe a racialized society as “a society wherein race matters profoundly for differences in life experiences, life opportunities and social relationships.”³¹ Racism requires intent

²⁹ Smith and Emerson, *Divided by Faith*, 90-92, Kindle.

³⁰ Smith and Emerson, *Divided by Faith*, 213-214, Kindle.

³¹ Smith and Emerson, *Divided by Faith*, 183-184, Kindle.

to discriminate based on race or ethnicity. With racialization, the intent is not to deliberately discriminate, but the results are often the same.

Racialization would describe America today, and until things change, there will continue to be racial or ethnic tension in the United States. As the number of marginalized people in society grow, they begin to feel a lack of compassion towards how difficult things are for them, and frustration can shift acceptance into anger. At that point it can be one event, or multiple events, that push people to action.

The Black Lives Matter Movement

The issues of religious liberty and social justice in the political realm have challenged the unity of believers, as affirmative action, abortion, welfare, and moral conscience have in many ways divided black and white Christians along Democratic and Republican party lines. But the murders that started in 2012 brought things to a head. Blumberg and Kuruvilla write, “The Black Lives Matter movement was born out of the pain and injustice of Trayvon Martin’s death in 2012 and gathered momentum in the wake of the killings of Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Walter Scott, Tamir Rice and far too many others. The movement issued a call to action for people everywhere to recognize the reality of institutionalized racism.”³²

This has called the church to react, and many white congregations and Christians again failed to step in when they had a chance. Instead of showing love and compassion, which should always be the church’s first response, they questioned the backgrounds of

³² Antonia Blumberg and Carol Kuruvilla, “How the Black Lives Matter Movement Changed the Church,” Huffington Post, August 8, 2015 (updated January 3, 2017), accessed January 10, 2018. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/how-the-blacklivesmatter-movement-changed-the-church_us_55c4f54ce4b0923c12bcc8c0.

those whose lives were taken from them. The white response to “Black Lives Matter” was “all lives matter” and “Blue Lives Matter.” Both of these statements miss the point. There was a need to say that “Black Lives Matter” because there is a feeling among people of color that their lives do not matter as much as white lives.

As the movement began to grow, many who felt oppressed attached themselves to the Black Lives Matter cause. It was viewed as a means to promote equality on issues such as transgenderism and sexuality, viewpoints that stand in conflict with Judeo-Christian principles. The Gospel Coalition had this to say about it in 2016, “there are enough major differences to say Black Lives Matter is not an extension or rebirth of the Civil Rights Movement. Still I strongly recommend full engagement with the concept and critical engagement with the movement, especially since there’s no evangelical alternative to Black Lives Matter. It grieves me deeply to say that there’s no evangelical movement robustly, consistently, and practically affirming the value of disparaged black people.”³³

The question is, “why not?” One challenge to a secondary Evangelical (white) option is that it implies that “you have to do things our way.” This was a point brought up to me by a brother in Christ who is African American. Why have white Evangelical congregations not reached out to grieve with their African American brothers and sisters, and to seek justice with them? Loss of life should cause the Christian heart to grieve and cause passion to seek justice. Yet in these cases there were accusations and finger pointing. Could it be that we do not grieve together and seek justice together because we are not in fellowship with one another? How might things be different if we found

³³ Mika Edmondson, “Is Black Lives Matter the New Civil Rights Movement?,” The Gospel Coalition, June 24, 2016, accessed January 10, 2018, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/is-black-lives-matter-the-new-civil-rights-movement>.

opportunities to regularly have fellowship with one another, and worship with one another, and to genuinely love one another as brothers and sisters in Christ? America may be a society that is becoming increasingly desensitized; but when someone you love is grieving, you grieve.

The data indicates a lack of regular (Sunday morning) Christian fellowship between races and ethnicities. According to Emerson, “As of 2007 (our most recent data with such detail), 85 percent of congregations in the United States were comprised of at least 90 percent of one group. As of 2010, just 4 percent of all congregations claimed to have no racial majority.”³⁴ Toby McKeegan addresses the issue of homogeneous lives when he sings “Leave us alone, we’re at home in our fantasies, I know a guy who knows a guy who has brown skin, Once in a while if it so happens I’m around him.”³⁵ The thought is that people are not necessarily avoiding other ethnicities; but they are not searching them out either. However, if there is no intentionality, how is the cycle going to be broken, especially in the church?

Rah challenges white evangelicals who have known nothing outside of the western culture congregations. He calls out white evangelicals on where they have been and where they are, and challenges them to look at things from other perspectives, ones they would not have chosen as they seek to see that the way things have always done is not necessarily the right or biblical way to do them. According to Rah, “The danger of the Western, white captivity of the church is an excessive individualism and personalism that reflects the narcissism of American culture rather than the redemptive power of the

³⁴ Michael O. Emerson, “A New Day for Multiracial Congregations,” *Reflections*, The Future of Race (2013), accessed on January 10, 2018, <https://reflections.yale.edu/article/future-race/new-day-multiracial-congregations>.

³⁵ Toby MacKeegan, *Fresher Than a Night at the W*, from the album Welcome to Diverse City (2004), released October 8, 2004, ForeFront Records.

gospel message.”³⁶ It is not that Rah sees no place for individualism, just not to the extent that it is currently seen.

The other issue with racism, or racialization, is that it is antithetical to biblical teaching. In dealing with matters of race, Rah writes “Racism elevates the physical image above the spiritual image of God endowed to us by the Creator. Racism is ‘idolatry.’ It is a decisive act of turning away from God to the creature. It is the worship of the creature instead of the Creator (Romans 1:25). Racism is complete deification which . . . elevates a human factor to the level of the ultimate. . . Large numbers of Christians have failed to identify self-deification in its purest form, namely, racism. Racism alone claims ultimacy for human beings.”³⁷

Edward Gilbreath makes the following statement: “People do not need to be racist – or have any malicious intent – in order to make decisions that unfairly harm members of another race. They simply have to do what comes naturally.”³⁸ The church has to do more than just try and let people feel welcome. There are times when, in an attempt to make people feel welcome, individuals and churches can actually attempt things that are received in a different way than they are intended. Gilbreath offers examples so that people have a better understanding of this concept. In fact, he calls us to wrestle with the following statement: “When we silently enjoy the benefits of racism; when we do not protest injustice to those who are poor, powerless and oppressed; when we decide it is not our problem and go on enjoying the fruits of a racist system, then we too are racist.”³⁹

³⁶ Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism*, 447-448, Kindle.

³⁷ Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism*, 1330-1334, Kindle.

³⁸ Edward Gilbreath, *Reconciliation Blues: A Black Evangelical's Inside View of White Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 175-176, Kindle.

³⁹ Gilbreath, *Reconciliation Blues*, 485-486, Kindle.

Lecrae Moore, a Rapper who is a Christian who no longer desires to be labeled a Christian artist, has publicly stepped away from American Evangelicalism. Lecrae had been popular with the younger white evangelicals, but when he started speaking out about social injustice, many turned on him. He has multiple songs on his most recent album that deal with social injustice. In the song “Facts” where he sings “*They say, “‘Crae, you so divisive, shouldn’t be a black church” I say, “Do the math, segregation started that first!” Hey, you want unity? Then read a eulogy, Kill the power that exists up under you and over me.*”⁴⁰ Lecrae has a point. When are white evangelicals going to be willing to sacrifice and do what is necessary to fight systemic racism (or racialization) and work to bring unity?

A Call to Christian Unity

Even with the challenges that American churches face, perhaps the greatest is to bring Christian unity to American and global Christianity. As was mentioned in the introduction, as of 2014 about 14% of American churches are multiethnic (with no more than 80% of the congregation being one ethnicity).⁴¹ In a *Christianity Today* article interview with Mark DeYmaz, author and co-founder of Mosaix Network (geared towards bringing the multiethnic church movement forward), he speaks of the New Testament call to a multiethnic church and his feeling that this movement is still in the

⁴⁰ Lecrae, *Facts*, from the album *All Things Work Together* (2017), Released September 22, 2017, Reach Records, LLC under exclusive license to Columbia Records, a division of Sony Music Entertainment.

⁴¹ Bob Smietana, “Research: Racial Diversity at Church More Dream than Reality,” LifeWay Research, January 17, 2014, accessed May 10, 2017, <http://lifewayresearch.com/2014/01/17/research-racial-diversity-at-church-more-dream-than-reality/>.

pioneer stage.⁴² It is DeYmaz's desire, and the desire of others, to see 20% of the congregations have at least 20% diversity by the year 2020. Those seeking to build Christian unity in the church understand the benefits of cross-cultural worship and fellowship.

Smith and Emerson use an illustration from John Perkins. Perkins is a man who grew up during segregation and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, and has spent his life working in the area of ministry and social justice. He also formed the Christian Community Development Association (CCDA) that is based around inspiring, training, and connecting Christians and Christian churches to engage in impacting under-resourced neighborhoods and communities of all different races and ethnicities.

Perkins uses an illustration about a baseball team that has been cheating for most of the game. Then in the 7th inning they acknowledge that the game has been unfair. Yet they want to finish the current game with a score that is completely out of balance. How can things be made fair and balanced, and try to make up for differences, without going the complete opposite way and have the next generation have to suffer without jobs? This is a challenge for white evangelical Christians. Does this generation say to the next generation that since things have been unfair for generations, your generation is going to be the one to pay for the sins of your forefathers, and pay for that with your potential livelihood? There are no easy answers. However, working towards solutions is easier when relationships are formed and there is a better understanding of the hardships that have been faced. Moreover, out of love there should be more of a desire to make things right.

⁴² Mark DeYmaz, "Theology of a Multi Ethnic Church," *Christianity Today* (June 2010), accessed January 8, 2018, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2010/june-online-only/theology-of-multi-ethnic-church.html>.

Smith and Emerson write that “if white evangelicals were less racially isolated, they might assess race problems differently and, working in unison with others, apply their evangelical vigor to broader-based solution.”⁴³ With this in mind, cross-cultural relationships must become a priority. They must be impressed upon the larger white evangelical community. Until the problem is seen through the eyes of someone who is living it, it will not become a priority. May there be a renewed vigor for building cross-cultural relationships, and for encouraging others to do the same, so that Christian unity can become a reality.

Where was the church, and where is the church? Given our current racial challenges, why is it that we as a church are not doing more to come together? With this in view, Perkins shares his hope for unity in the church:

“Think about it. If we actually went to church together, if we actually considered our brothers and sisters of different ethnicities and classes to be vital members of the body of Christ, what a great witness we would be for the world in which we live! I am all for churches being a part of the nonviolent marches and protests that have happened in the wake of violent killings, but these protests happen only after a tragic event has taken place. I want the church to be what prevents these acts from ever happening. I want the church to be the community that is so dedicated to loving our neighbors, to caring for the poor and neglected, and to living out true reconciliation that these killings do not even take place. I want the white police officers to be sitting next to the young black boys in church on Sunday, singing songs and praying together, learning to be members of the same family of God. I want the single black mother and the family that recently emigrated from

⁴³ Smith and Emerson, *Divided by Faith*, 2753-2755, Kindle.

Latin America to go up and take Communion together. I want the older widow, who has been living out a lonely life in a nursing home, to be visited and cared for by the young man whose third-grade test scores said he would end up in prison someday. I want this to be the picture of the church. I want to see a real community of love. Everyone wants to fight crime, fight violence, fight racism, and fight injustice, but love is still the final fight, and unless we have these communities of love, we will never see this dream realized.”⁴⁴

The Need for Cross-Cultural Intelligence

For there to be Christian unity, there needs to be willingness to develop cultural intelligence. David A. Livermore writes “Our goal is not simply to learn more about different cultures, nor is it just to become better at “navigating cultural differences.” We must actually become more multicultural people so that we might better express love cross-culturally.”⁴⁵ The desire is to become multicultural people. Unless there is a willingness to understand the cultures that are being interacted with without a purpose that includes personal gain, then the motive is not love.

This is similar to Christians who work to develop friendships for the sole purpose of leading someone to Christ, only to discontinue the friendship if the person does not appear to be moving towards becoming a Christian. Livermore writes about this regarding Christian missionaries who have brought the gospel to people of other cultures while “insisting that locals adopt dress, use music, and build churches that mirror their

⁴⁴ John M. Perkins, *Dream with Me: Race, Love, and the Struggle We Must Win* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2017), 199-200, Kindle.

⁴⁵ David A. Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence (Youth, Family, and Culture): Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group; 2009), 12, Kindle.

own.”⁴⁶ Livermore amplifies this topic by looking at Christians who go on short-term missions’ trips. “Short-term missionaries often travel to Mexico to show love to the locals there for ten days and return home isolated from the Mexicans living in their own communities. Worse yet, some short-term missionaries continue to discriminate against ethnic groups at home while lavishing love and attention on people they encounter abroad.”⁴⁷ Any cultural intelligence in a situation like this was not ingrained upon the heart. In Livermore’s opinion “we cannot fulfill our God-given mission to love others without contextualizing ourselves through a pathway like cultural intelligence.”⁴⁸ This God-given mission is not about ten days work on a short-term missions trip, but a lifetime of work which God prepared for us to do.

Elaborating on the goal or purpose of developing cross-cultural intelligence, Rah mentions that “cultural intelligence requires knowledge about our own cultural framework and the immediacy of our cultural environment. But it also requires a willingness to go to another place and reflect upon your own culture and to see the culture of others from a new angle.”⁴⁹ It requires learning individual personalities and tendencies, including baselines so that there can be an understanding of why someone thinks or acts a certain way in certain situations. It also enables people to begin the process of viewing other cultures differently. Through this process there comes a better understanding of the challenges that people from other cultures face.

Rah uses the analogy of culture being like an iceberg. Much of what we see is that which is above the surface. However, the majority of what is driving it is not visible.

⁴⁶ Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence*, 18.

⁴⁷ Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence*, 27.

⁴⁸ Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence*, 32.

⁴⁹ Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing World* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2010), 1069, Kindle.

“Below the water are a culture’s internal aspects: concepts of personal space, ideas regarding modesty and beauty, concepts of leadership, beliefs about how children are raised, concepts of fairness, values, and understanding of truth.”⁵⁰ These are the aspects that need to be understood if there is to be a connection between people. For cross-cultural relationship to grow and flourish, there must be some level of cultural intelligence. Through this process the white evangelical can begin to understand the privileges that they have enjoyed over other races and ethnicities. It will also show that just leveling the playing field from now on is not actually leveling the playing field.

To develop cross-cultural relationships, there also must be an understanding of culture to understand values and assumptions that a culture finds important. This understanding will enable us to comprehend why certain behaviors are the way that they are. Matthew D. Kim defines culture “as a group’s way of living, way of thinking, and way of behaving in the world, for which we need understanding and empathy to guide our listeners toward Christian maturity.”⁵¹ There is more to culture than what is outwardly seen, it affects values and beliefs. Without at least a basic knowledge of why people think or feel the way they do, conflict will unwillingly arise as cultural values and beliefs are challenged by conflicting values and beliefs.

Beyond that, there needs to be an awareness that just because certain people may look alike or talk alike does not mean that they are alike culturally. Thomas Sowell writes “Even when the larger society is oblivious to finer breakdowns of subgroups within a given group—when ‘all blacks look alike,’ for example—the differences among these subgroups are often as large as the differences between the whole group and the

⁵⁰ Rah, *Many Colors*, 1108-1110, Kindle.

⁵¹ Matthew D. Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence: Understanding the People Who Hear Our Sermons* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 10, Kindle.

general population.”⁵² Culture is not just about an individual’s color or language. For there are people who look the same but have different cultures, as well as those who appear to be different, but who come from a similar cultural background.

In looking at culture, Sowell speaks of situations where certain behaviors or jobs would create a culture “stigma of dishonor.”⁵³ In this writing, Sowell communicates the impact that race and culture can have in different aspects of life such as economics, politics, and intelligence. He also writes about people who verbally oppose their cultures yet still live according to the behaviors they put down. And cultural intelligence is not just a matter of learning new things. It often requires unlearning things that appeared to be true. Noemi Chavez, on a conference call to the Redemptive Leadership cohort, mentioned that it was not just what you know. She had to learn to break down some of the cultural issues that had been made almost doctrinal.⁵⁴ There needs to be a willingness to look at everything again with the assistance of other leaders who might see things differently, and see what is scriptural, and what has been added culturally that could be changed to accommodate another culture.

The goal in gaining cross-cultural intelligence is not just understanding and blindly accepting other cultures for the sake of cross-cultural unity. Culture needs to be seen while the primary focus is God’s kingdom. Livermore writes “As God’s kingdom subjects, we live out the gospel by both embracing and protesting various cultural values just as Jesus did... We want to develop our ability to live out the presence of Jesus in a

⁵² Thomas Sowell, *Race and Culture: A World View* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1994), 3.

⁵³ Sowell, *Race and Culture*, 26.

⁵⁴ This idea was brought forth by Noemi Chavez during a video roundtable on May 12, 2016 as a part of the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary’s Doctor of Ministry program in the tract Redemptive Leadership in a multiethnic setting. The discussion was around things that the cohort needs to know when seeking to lead their church to become multiethnic.

way that the surrounding cultures can understand while simultaneously developing a kingdom culture that often looks countercultural.”⁵⁵ This requires an understanding of God’s kingdom and culture, as well as the positive and negative parts of modern cultures that will impact one’s ability to be used for kingdom work.

Cultural intelligence should affect a congregation’s preaching, teaching and ministry. Kim writes “My definition of culture for preachers seeks to be holistic and intentionally broad in nature: culture is a group’s way of living, way of thinking, and way of behaving in the world, for which we need understanding and empathy to guide listeners toward Christian maturity.”⁵⁶ The goal of cultural intelligence is not just to see God’s influence and beauty in different cultures, but to reach out and speak into those cultures with the truth of the gospel. Kim does, however, make sure that there is an understanding that a desire for cultural intelligence does not allow one to alter the Gospel. However, there should be a desire to see how the scripture was written in a certain cultural framework, and then to work to make sure that proper application is made to the cultures being reached. On this point Livermore writes that “if you can’t translate any of your understanding and interpretation into behavior that positions you to communicate and interact effectively, all of your knowledge and interpretive CQ won’t make much difference.”⁵⁷ He defines CQ as the cultural intelligence quotient which “measures the ability to effectively reach across the chasm of cultural difference in ways that are loving and respectful.”⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence*, 41.

⁵⁶ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 5.

⁵⁷ Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence*, 52.

⁵⁸ Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence*, 13.

Kim writes “God has permitted each person to embody an ethnicity, experience particular cultures, and have unique life experiences, all to be used in building up his church in the midst of a fallen world. It is, then, our pastoral delight to equip our varied listeners from all cultural backgrounds to develop in their spiritual maturity and to bring glory to God.”⁵⁹ With this understanding, cultural intelligence is critical as the body of Christ seeks to become whole and to lead all towards spiritual maturity. There is no right or wrong culture, just right or wrong aspects of different cultures. The desire should be to connect and better understand different cultures so that the church’s culture is more like the kingdom culture that will be seen in heaven. Since it is difficult for one person to have an intimate understanding of multiple cultures, one of the best ways to be able to understand and connect with different cultures is to have a diverse leadership team that can represent multiple cultures. This can happen once there is an understanding that Christian unity is important.

The Importance of Multiethnic Leadership for Unity in the Body

There is an important step in the process if the white churches desire Christian unity. It will require that the laity in white churches understand the importance of Christian unity. “The intended outcome of establishing a multiethnic church is not unity for unity’s sake. Rather, it is to turn the power and pleasure of God.”⁶⁰ It should be to fulfill the Great Commission.⁶¹ It should be out of obedience to Christ and as a desired fulfillment of His prayer, that the world may know that they are loved, and that Jesus is

⁵⁹ Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence*, 60-61.

⁶⁰ Mark DeYmaz and Harry Li, *Ethnic Blends: Mixing Diversity into Your Local Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 50, Kindle.

⁶¹ Matt 28:18-20.

who He says He is.⁶² If there is not a real understanding of why the church should be united, it will be difficult for the congregants to be willing to sacrifice for unity. And there will need to be sacrifices for the church to be united.

Rah makes the following points regarding ethnicity and leadership: “If the places at the table are already set, and ethnic minorities are asked to put aside their comfort to join an already existing power dynamic and structure, then we are not engaging in genuine ethnic diversity;”⁶³ and, “Not confronting white privilege is the passive acceptance of that privilege, which equates to an active embracing of that privilege. White privilege continues with even a passive acceptance of the status quo, which maintains the status of white power and dominance. To confront and alter the state of white privilege requires a proactive yielding and a purposeful laying down of power by those who are beneficiaries of white privilege.”⁶⁴ There needs to be a strong understanding of why this is necessary, otherwise it will never work. If we are all equal, created in the image of God, then one person’s word is not more important than another’s. If white evangelicals are going to say that “All Lives Matter” as a way of saying that everyone is equal, then it needs to be lived out by allowing those who have not been in power to be in power.

Trust is an issue between races and ethnicities. Ta-Nehisi Coates has a severe lack of trust for white authority.⁶⁵ Coates describes this lack of trust as seen through his eyes. Whether his views are right or wrong is irrelevant to the following question. Alexander shows a similar lack of trust when she discusses the involvement of the CIA targeting

⁶² John 17:20-23.

⁶³ Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism*, 2041-2042, Kindle.

⁶⁴ Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism*, 2732-2735, Kindle.

⁶⁵ Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me* (New York, NY: Spiegel and Grau, 2015).

inner-city minority with drugs. In 2017, Ekow N. Yankah was going to teach his children that he has his doubts whether his children can trust white people. He writes “History has provided little reason for people of color to trust white people in this way, and these recent months have put in the starkest relief the contempt with which the country measures the value of racial minorities.”⁶⁶

So why would someone who does not trust white Americans want to be connected to, or even trust, a church with all white leadership? Leadership is a way for the church to show who is valued. If there are no minorities in leadership, then the statement is being made that the majority culture knows what is best and can speak for the minority culture. It is this view that has perpetuated this problem.

An African American pastor helped DeYmaz, founding pastor of Mosaic church, understand the implications of having people of other ethnicities fill only certain roles in the church. “Mark, if you hire or otherwise empower African Americans only to lead your church in worship, you may inadvertently suggest to people, “We accept them as entertainers.” Or if you hire or otherwise empower African Americans only to work with your children, you may inadvertently suggest, “We accept them to nanny our kids.” And if you hire or otherwise employ African Americans only as janitors, you are quite clearly stating, “We expect them to clean up after us.” It is only when you allow us to share your pulpit, to serve with you on the elder board or alongside you in apportioning the money that we will be truly one with you in the church.”⁶⁷ Sharing in leadership is a way of saying, “you are viewed as an equal.” Mosaic has shown that as the leadership has

⁶⁶ Ekow N. Yankah, “Can My Children Be Friends With White People?” *New York Times*, November 11, 2017, accessed January 12, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/11/opinion/sunday/interracial-friendship-donald-trump.html>.

⁶⁷ Mark DeYmaz, *Building a Healthy Multi-ethnic Church: Mandate, Commitments and Practices of a Diverse Congregation* (San Francisco, CA: Wiley, 2007), 74, Kindle.

diversified, so also has the congregation diversified in correlation to the ethnicities in leadership.

Gilbreath takes this concept a step further. He makes it clear that if people are going to truly work to be multiethnic, then it requires more than just adding ethnic diversity to the church staff. Work needs to be done to actually develop relationships with those of other ethnicities. There needs to be a willingness to seek their input and their guidance. There needs to be an understanding that there is much to learn cross-culturally, and a willingness to allow others with more understanding to impart their wisdom on different perspectives.

Ultimately, there needs to be self-reflection to discern what are cultural assumptions, and from there to determine their validity, and break them down so that they can be replaced with new ideas and thoughts. We need to develop cultural intelligence if the desire is to bring different cultures together.

For churches that only have one staff member, this might be harder, but it is still possible. Consider placing people of different ethnicities into key volunteer positions. Have them be in prominent roles on different boards. Make sure that they understand that they are valuable to the cause of Christ in the local church, and that they are a part of a team. Lingenfelter mentions that every multicultural team must have a solid theological understanding of what it means to be a part of the body of Christ. He lays this out with scripture with the key being our new identity that “begins by denying self, taking up our cross, and following Jesus.”⁶⁸ An important key is both having an understanding of and training in what it means to be a covenant community. We must refocus our identities to

⁶⁸ Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 1180, Kindle.

being followers of Christ first, with national and ethnic identities second. This changes one's priorities and the way things are done because the motivation is love and submission.

In speaking about diversity in leadership, Rah points out the potential that second-generation Hispanics can play in bridging the gap in multiethnic churches. "Who will fill the leadership role of the next generation? Even as the demographics of the United States change, the second-generation progeny of immigrants are uniquely poised to serve as leaders of the next generation. In contrast to the emergent church which only furthers the Western, white captivity of the American church, a truly new social contract is needed between the previous generation and the next generation."⁶⁹ Second-generation minorities from different ethnic cultures have their feet in two worlds. They are in one culture at home, and then in the Euro-American culture in school. This gives them the distinct advantage, as well as challenge, of standing in the cultural gap, speaking to people on both sides and ministering to them simultaneously.

Ultimately, the difference in biblical leadership is seen in whether leaders see themselves as power-seeking or power-giving. It was helpful to see this presented through the lens of the book of Philemon. Paul meets up with Onesimus (a slave who ran away from his master), connects with Paul, and gives his life to Christ. While he is with Paul, he is extremely helpful, but at some point Paul is able to convince him that he needs to return to Philemon, another man Paul led to Christ, to make things right.

Paul empowers both Onesimus and Philemon to do the right things. But rather than forcing them to do what is right, he encourages them, giving them the power to make the right decisions. Paul encourages Onesimus to return, something he could not

⁶⁹ Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism*, 3299-3302, Kindle.

force Onesimus to do. In fact, Onesimus could have lied to Paul and then run away again. But by giving Onesimus the power to make the right choice, he does what he should do.

In Paul's letter to Philemon, he makes it clear that he could order Philemon to treat Onesimus as a brother in Christ, but he appeals to him persuasively to do it of his own accord. Once again, Philemon is given the power to make a choice and do the right thing.

In both cases, Paul is giving the men the choice to make the right decisions. Paul has not taken the power to make the right decision from either of them. He has empowered them to do what is right. As hard as this is to consider, the better model is clearly power-giving. This requires a great deal of faith, as Paul had to trust that they would make the right decisions. In the end, however, they would both be better off for having done the right thing of their own accord.

Dealing with Conflict

One of the challenges in working with individuals or groups is the potential for conflict. This potential increases to near certainty when you add different cultures that will process information through the lens of their cultural values and beliefs. DeYmaz writes "In pursuit of cross-cultural relationships then, let me stipulate right up front that there will be things said and sometimes done that will cause a measure of misunderstanding. It's just going to happen, so you might as well expect it!"⁷⁰ This was made clear in books quoted above by Carson, Emerson, DeYmaz, Rah, and others. Therefore, if a church is going to work toward becoming multiethnic, it must be prepared

⁷⁰ DeYmaz, *Building a Healthy Multi-ethnic Church*, 85, Kindle.

to deal with conflict. Livermore puts it this way, “We all find ourselves encountering people from vastly different cultural backgrounds. As a result, cultural clashes and the ability to lovingly relate to one another are some of the critical issues of our day.”⁷¹

Lencioni roots the fear of conflict to an absence of trust. And trust is something that can be hard to find in cross-cultural relationships. Trust can come from a relationship, or be seen as commitment to be the plan. For a church seeking to be multiethnic, there has to be a commitment to stick through its calling to be multiethnic even when things get difficult. It can be hard to trust outside of a relationship that has had opportunities to have that trust challenged. This is one of the reasons that it may take time to transition a church. If the relationships have not been built with people of different ethnicities, then the first step might be to develop relationships so that trust can be built. If there are relationships cross-culturally that have developed trust, it is easier to move forward as people coming in can look to those other relationships as a barometer towards the trustworthiness of the leader.

Once there is trust, the door is open for healthy conflict. Healthy conflict risks uncomfortable dialogue in order to develop closer relationships and work towards unity and a common cause. If there is not a platform for people to share their views and feelings (which is often found in healthy conflict), there will be a lack of commitment. Gerzon makes the following point, “Dialogue is an inquiry-based, trust-building way of communicating that maximizes the human capacity to bridge and to innovate.”⁷²

Looking at the setting of a multiethnic church, there needs to be an understanding of different perspectives and different worldviews due to different upbringings in either

⁷¹ Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence*, 23.

⁷² Mark Gerzon, *Leading through Conflict: How Successful Leaders Transform Differences into Opportunities* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2006), 1091-1092, Kindle.

majority or minority cultures. Thus cross-cultural dialogue enables us to develop a better understanding and build trust so that we will be willing to make sacrifices.

Out of these relationships and a willingness to consider making sacrifices, people can begin to work things out and come up with joint solutions to conflict and problems instead of one group telling another group what needs to be done. There needs to be a desire to go beyond camaraderie to build ownership for all parties involved. When people are allowed to be a part of the solution, there is more of a willingness to accept the solution and move on.

This chapter helps provide a better understanding of some of the root causes of the divided church in America, both past and present. There should an awareness that the church needs to commit to becoming intentionally diverse. This awareness will require the church to gain a better understanding of cultures that surround them, and to diversify their leadership to make this happen.

There is also an understanding that conflict will invariably happen. If, however, there is an earnest desire to be the kingdom that Christ has called the church to be, and a willingness to work through conflict in Christian love, the beauty of the unity that the world will see will be a glowing example to a world of a God who loves them and a Savior who died for them.

Now that the biblical and literature reviews have shown the necessity for both multiethnic congregations and multiethnic leadership, the focus will shift to the case study that was performed at the Elm Street Community Church. The next chapter will look at some of the context for the study, as well as the different research methodologies

use. These methodologies were put in place to determine whether the hypothesis, that multiethnic leadership will lead to more diversity in the congregation, is correct.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH REVIEW

This chapter will discuss the different forms of research used to collect data regarding whether adding diversity to leadership actually makes a difference in a congregation that feels called to become multiethnic. The different forms of research that were used in this study were the following: Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI); a focus group from those who are not a part of the majority in the congregation; participation observations from the researcher; a brief Survey Monkey questionnaire offered to attendees of the congregation; and comprehensive one-on-one interviews with key attendees and leaders, including a comprehensive one-on-one with the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries. These research tools will provide both qualitative and quantitative data which will give us a better understanding of whether the hypothesis was (or will be) correct.

Context

There are a few contexts that need to be pointed out so that the proper context can be understood. The first point comes from the church's call to become multiethnic. At the Elm Street Community Church's Elders' Retreat in 2006, the pastor shared a vision with the elders that he felt the church was being called to become multiethnic. The church, at that time, was composed of predominately elderly members of Finnish decent, and being multiethnic was being either Finnish or being Caucasian. As the pastor shared the direction in which he felt the congregation would go, there was a request that it not be shared until the congregation was ready to receive it. That would not come for four

years. At that time the congregation had a handful of people from different ethnicities. As time went by, God began bringing people who would begin to chip away at some of the racial prejudices that were present. Also, by this time the number of Sunday morning congregants of Finnish descent had decreased. Some of the older Finnish members passed away, and others decided that they would limit their attendance to the Wednesday afternoon seniors' program (Good News Fellowship). During this period the church's outreaches were to a predominately Latino population that was now living in the neighborhood.

During the spring of 2014 the pastor and elders thought that the time was right to let the church know that the church was being called to become multiethnic. Throughout the summer the church held focus groups to gather input on how this was to be received, and what expectations might come from such a shift. During this time, we lost a couple of core individuals who had struggled through the shift to become multigenerational and were not ready for more changes. In the fall of that year, the church voted to support the pastor so that he could gain the necessary knowledge to assist the congregation in moving in the direction God was calling it to go.

The second point of context comes from the preaching that has gone on over the last three years. Upon coming back from his first residency, the pastor began preaching on the biblical foundations of a multiethnic church. This was a focus over the summer, but has also been woven into messages and sermons since that time (On a side note, this was extremely well received by our regular attendees who were not of the predominant culture). It is difficult to push an elephant; trying to push a congregation to a place it does not believe it needs to go would be a challenge. The other challenge was getting a

predominately white congregation to understand that there are privileges that they have because of the color of their skin that others do not have (white privilege). This is a process that the congregation is still working through.

The third point of context is that, to see the impact that comes from adding a person of ethnicity to the leadership of a mono-ethnic church, there needs to be someone to add. This person must be someone who has spiritual maturity and leadership qualifications. The Elm Street Community Church did not have a person who fit the qualifications, so the leadership began to pray about and search for that person. Because of the belief that there was a need for multiethnic leadership before this thesis project started, the pastor began to reach out to churches that were predominately of a different race or ethnicity. The pastors were gracious but unable to accommodate. Fortunately, in the spring of 2016, representatives from the Cecil B. Day Foundation met with the pastor. After asking him what was necessary to advance the work of ministry at the Elm Street Community Church, a grant was proposed and accepted to enable the church to bring on a part time Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries with the expectation that the church would continue to fund the position once the grant was over. This project would not have been possible without their assistance.

The fourth point of context would be that the Nashua Valley Christian Church, a local congregation which had lost the ability to worship in its own space, began to join us for worship starting in November of 2015. This church of approximately twenty people has been with our church ever since. Although the Nashua Valley Christian Church will not be included in the demographical data, six of their members who have assisted in different areas (primarily music and sound) took part in the Intercultural Diversity

Inventory (IDI). The members of their church were also encouraged to fill out the Survey Monkey that was administered at the end of the project.

The fifth point of context is that in January of 2017 we added a translation system to prepare the way for whomever the Lord would call to this position. Understanding that much of our outreach has been to Latinos over the last ten plus years, the translation system was purchased, and two people committed to translate when it was necessary.

Finally, since the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries has been on staff, a few programmatic changes have been made. Our website can now be viewed in both English and Spanish. References to the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries were added to the website and on the bulletin. After reading the Scripture in English and then in Spanish one Sunday, there was a decision to continue that, and it has been going on ever since. We have most recently begun projecting the scripture in both languages. There has also been the addition of pantomime. This is something that many in the church from the predominantly white population had not seen in a church setting. The church has included more drama than there was before. The church has expanded its corporate time of prayer to include prayers in different languages. The church currently has five different languages represented (English, Finnish, Spanish, Greek, and Japanese); they are utilized approximately once a month. There has also been the addition of songs that are sung in English and Spanish. A song is done in this format about once a month.

This context will help the reader understand the place the church was in when the research project was done, as well as some of the changes that will be mentioned throughout the research project.

Intercultural Development Inventory

Because the Elm Street Community Church was looking at the impact of adding diversity to leadership, an Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) was administered to the elders' board, as well as to many who would consider themselves to be in leadership at the beginning. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) that was taken was designed for educational institutions to assist them in understanding how they experience cultural differences in a group setting. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) offers both an individual profile (not included) and a group profile (see Appendix A). There are fifteen pages in the group profile. Many of these pages explain the profile itself, what can be gained from it, and give the group a better understanding of their cultural competence. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) was performed by Dr. Rodney Cooper.

Out of the demographics of the group that took the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) that is found on pages eleven to fifteen, only the first six questions are applicable to this project. Of the participants, over seventy-five percent were fifty-one years of age or older. Also, over seventy-five percent have never lived in another country. Only one participant has lived in another country for more than eleven months; he is the new Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries. All participants had finished high school, and sixty-five percent were post-secondary graduates (either bachelor's or master's degrees). And all but one considers their primary country of citizenship to be the United States (the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries' primary citizenship is Puerto Rico, which is an American territory).

One of the areas this profile looked at was the difference between perceived and developmental orientation. Perceived orientation is the level of cultural competence that a group thinks it has, whereas developmental orientation is the group's actual competence. The ranges in this subset include the following: Denial; Polarization; Defense/Reversal; Minimization; Acceptance; and Adaptation. The group's perceived orientation score put its perceived orientation (PO) in the acceptance range, "reflecting an orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference in one's own and other cultures in values, perceptions and behaviors."⁷³ The developmental orientation (DO) is actually in the minimization range, "reflecting a tendency to highlight commonalities across cultures that can mask important cultural differences in values, perceptions and behaviors."⁷⁴ The leadership in this organization perceives itself to be further along in the process of cultural competence than it really is. The educational example on page seven is helpful as it shares that those organizations in the minimization stage are moving in the right direction and working on making an inclusive community, but may struggle in areas that require creative solutions to problems that arise. Included on page seven is a breakdown of the range of developmental orientations. The narrow range in the developmental orientation demonstrates that the group will tend to be consistent in its perceptions and behaviors.

Although this study was not designed for churches, there were benefits in taking it. The individuals who are in leadership hopefully have a better understanding of their cultural competence. As a group, the leadership is moving in the right direction but still has work to do. Moving forward, the goal for leadership, according to the Intercultural

⁷³ Appendix A, Intercultural Development Inventory, 126.

⁷⁴ Appendix A, Intercultural Development Inventory, 126.

Development Inventory (IDI) would be to develop more opportunities to interact with and learn from different cultures. This will enable the group to go beyond viewing areas of similarities and enable it to do a better job appreciating what other cultures have to offer the body of Christ.

Ethnic Focus Group

There was discussion among the church leaders regarding holding a focus group with some of the ethnic attendees of the church. We decided to hold off until this project was underway. There were also discussions with leadership to make sure that they understood the expectations that would result from holding this type of focus group. If changes were not implemented from the recommendations of the focus group, then the group that took part might think that their opinions were not taken seriously or were not important. If this happened, it would harm the direction the church was moving in.

On the other side, the researcher applied a format that he had received from similar groups at Grace Chapel in Lexington, MA.⁷⁵ He made sure that the focus group knew that there was a long-term plan that the church was looking to put into place. The hope in this was to reassure the group that even if every recommendation was not immediately put into place, there is a long-range plan to make adjustments and improvements.

The goal was to hold the focus group over the summer so that the church would be able to implement at least one change for the fall. Unfortunately, due to different schedules, this did not happen. The focus group was held on September 24, 2017. The

⁷⁵ This insight came from conversations with pastor Dana Baker, their pastor of Social Justice and Multicultural Ministry, on September 19, 2016, during work on the researcher's second post residency project for his doctoral program.

demographics of the group were individuals from Puerto Rico, Columbia, and Uruguay. There was one couple in their fifties (a pastor and his wife), with everyone else in their early twenties through early thirties.

Three main questions were presented to the group (beyond introductions). These questions dealt with things the church was doing right to make the church a welcoming place to people of different ethnicities, things the church could do differently (or add) to make it more welcoming, and priorities on the things that they thought should change or be added. The transcript can be viewed in Appendix B.

The first question was, “What are some things that this church is doing well, or changes we have already made, that you believe would make people of different ethnicities feel welcome?” Here were the responses.

The church is a devotional church (devoted to the Lord). Regarding the church service, there were many things that were pointed out as being both welcoming and comforting. The fact that the church has expanded the weekly corporate Bible reading to include both English and Spanish was comforting to those who were Spanish speaking. In many cases this was not an issue of understanding, but one of comfort. The feeling was that it is comfortable to hear the scripture in their native language – even for those who are completely bilingual. The same goes for music. The fact that the church has started to add in some contemporary songs in English and Spanish is welcoming. There was an appreciation for the willingness to add translation services to the service. Of significant importance was that special clothing was not required (did not feel judged) and that everyone is accepted, treated as equals, and has opportunities for leadership in

the church (as seen by the new Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries' position created).

The fact that the church serves the community regardless of ethnicity and that our doors are open to everyone, along with the fact that the youth enjoy coming means a lot, especially to those in the group who are younger. There was also an appreciation that the church allowed a Spanish service to launch, and that the church was willing to allow not only for the use of space but also of other assets in the church's possession.

The second question was, "What are some things that we could do, or do differently, to make people of different ethnicities feel more welcome?" The following answers were received, as well as one added while answering question three. There was the desire for a Heritage Day where different cultures could be represented (and there were different ideas around how this might happen). There was a question as to the congregation's awareness of the availability of translation services for the morning service. Another question concerned the potential inclusion of other languages besides English and Spanish, as well as the potential to have the church's Facebook page be bilingual. There was mention of a bilingual newsletter (the church does not currently offer a newsletter).

The most significant point raised, in the focus group's opinion, was the need for people to reach out after church. The challenge was to take the relationships beyond a Sunday morning only relationship. This dealt with connecting with new attendees soon after they attend, as well as working to build relationships that go beyond the church's walls.

The third and final question was, “If we were to implement a five-year plan to make changes, what are the top three things that we have mentioned (in order) that you would recommend we make?” The challenge with this question, the way the focus group ended up working it out, was that the ideas of making the church’s Facebook page bilingual and having a bilingual newsletter were added after people started prioritizing the other points. Furthermore, because there were a couple of people who needed to leave, we did not have enough time to start again. Reaching out after church was clearly the most important need in the eyes of the collective group that attended the focus group.

There was one question the facilitator asked briefly, trying not to sway the group to bring up things that they did not think were as important. They spoke briefly about the church building when the facilitator asked if there were any observations about the church building or property under question two (clarified by saying “physical church”). One person mentioned that they did not feel the appearance was important, while others took the question to mean something other than intended. So after the focus group was completed, the facilitator asked again about facilities, getting into detail regarding the condition of the church and the signage around the church building. Those in the group did not feel the condition of the facilities and proper signage were priorities to them. The open and welcoming nature of the church, as well as being a church devoted to the Lord was far more important. The fact that the question was asked actually surprised the group. In fact, one person asked, “Is the facility and its condition an issue for white churches?” to which the facilitator said, “Yes.” This created dialogue back and forth regarding views and priorities from different church cultures and settings. This dialogue gave the group a better understanding of the cultural differences in this area.

Participant Observations

Here are some of the participant observations made during the time between when the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries started and the time of the questionnaires. These range from comments that were heard that were not a part of the Focus Group, One-Group, After-Only Questionnaire, or Comprehensive Interviews.

One of the things apparent from the beginning was that if the leadership wanted the opinion of the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries, it was going to need to ask for it. There were times when you could see that the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries was observing what was going on around him, but if no one asked for his opinion, he rarely gave it. This could be due to his relatively young age, his modest and humble personality, or concerns over how his input would be received. When asked, his answers seemed carefully presented as not to offend, but his insights were often profound.

The Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries attended elders' meetings until his full-time job required that he leave soon after they started. He has been an integral part of the music ministry. A change was made to have him begin the morning worship service with the welcome and announcements. This has taken him time to get used to, as it is different than what he is used to coming from predominately Spanish speaking Puerto Rican church services.

Music has been a challenge as two churches have been trying to blend music, so he has tried to simply fit in. Again, this is an area where he has excellent insight, especially regarding music to be done in English and Spanish. However, he needs to be

asked and is not necessarily going to mention it if we have not done a blended song in a while. This has had to be drawn out of him.

The Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries has also worked to bridge the gap between those who predominately speak Spanish and those who predominately speak English. There was a Men's Fellowship dinner which the newly formed Spanish service men were invited to join. His input regarding the meal was helpful, because it has always been done in a way that would attract the white male population. His addition of a couple of Spanish food staples helped make the night more enjoyable for everyone. It was also fascinating to watch him navigate his way through two sets of conversations, attempting to bridge this cultural gap.

The most significant challenge has been a lack of time that he has for the position. Since it is only part-time, and he just graduated college, he needed to get a full-time job. Thus, the part-time position has not been able to be as many hours as were planned for. This has meant that he has not been able to participate as much of the outreach as we had hoped, especially during our Wednesday afterschool JAM time where we offer a free meal to people in the community. It is helpful to have someone there who speaks Spanish. When he is unable to be there, it affects our ability to communicate with those who come in the door who can not speak English (except when other bilingual members are present). It is also unfortunate that we have to miss his insight during the elders' meetings. Fortunately, the insight he brings to the table when he is there goes far beyond what we are missing when he is not.

One-Group, After-Only Questionnaire

At the end of the project, a One-Group, After-Only questionnaire was administered through Survey Monkey to the members and attendees of the congregation. The congregation was unaware that the questionnaire was coming – with the hope that they would be immersed in the study without trying to figure out what they were supposed to learn from it. This questionnaire deals mostly with perception, especially since those answering the questions on-line would not have access to the actual data that the question is looking for.

The survey included nine multiple-choice questions, as well as an opportunity to share thoughts or other input that was not answered through the multiple-choice questions. On average, it took less than three minutes for individuals to complete the survey. The survey link was placed in the Elm Street Community Church's bulletin for two weeks, announced from the lectern on those weeks, and e-mailed to different members and attendees if we had their e-mail addresses. Although there was no way to stop children from filling out the survey, I am unaware of anyone under the age of fifteen who did. This means that there are youth, many of whom would identify as non-Caucasian, who did not answer the survey. The survey was also administered in English and Spanish for those who might have different primary languages. The joint, Caucasian, and non-Caucasian survey responses can be found in Appendices C, D, and E.

Demographics

The first three questions deal with the demographics of those filling out the survey. Of the thirty-eight individuals who answered the survey, 71% identified

themselves as Caucasian, with 29% identifying themselves as non-Caucasian. The age demographics of the group are 26% under the age of twenty-five, 19% between the ages of twenty-six and fifty-four, 47% between the ages of fifty-five and seventy-four, and 8% of the participants were over seventy-five. Thus, the majority of the grouping (mode) is fifty-five to seventy-four.

Eight percent of the respondents are new to the church, having attended under a year, with 23% having attended from one to two years, 16% attending the church from three to five years, 37% attending five to thirteen years, and 16% have been a part of the church for over thirteen years. This shows that 84% of the respondents were not a part of the Elm Street Community Church before the current pastor was called to the church. It also shows that almost 50% started attending the church after the church made it public that it was deliberately working to be more intentionally multiethnic. The data also shows that 64% of non-Caucasians have been at the church for less than five years, or since the church has worked to be intentionally multiethnic.

Answers to Four Questions on Multiethnic Ministry

The first question asked that did not have to do with demographics was “Do you think that it is important for churches to be multiethnic (have no more than seventy percent be of one ethnicity)?”⁷⁶ Eighty-two percent of the respondents felt this was important. This includes eighty-one percent of Caucasians and eighty-two percent of non-Caucasians. It is interesting to note that the percentages were the same between Caucasians and non-Caucasians.

⁷⁶ Answers appear in Appendix C page 153, Appendix D page 163, and Appendix E page 172.

The next question asked was “How welcoming do you feel our congregation is to people of different ethnicities?”⁷⁷ No one responded that it was not welcoming, sixteen percent stated that the church was somewhat welcoming, and eighty-four percent stated that the church was very welcoming. This included one hundred percent of non-Caucasian respondents. This shows that the perception is that the church views itself as welcoming to people of different ethnicities, especially among those who are non-Caucasian.

The next question was “Have you enjoyed seeing diversity in leadership on Sunday mornings?”⁷⁸ One hundred percent stated that they have enjoyed seeing diversity on the platform on Sunday mornings. This is a positive sign, although it is possible that if someone was uncomfortable with this question they could have answered yes. Regardless, the number is significant as those who stated that they did not feel it was important to have diversity in church have enjoyed the diversity as it has been implemented. This diversity has brought with it Scripture reading in English and Spanish, as well as some Spanish music.

The next question was “Do you feel the church is more diverse than it was before we had a Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries?”⁷⁹ Seventy-one percent of the respondents stated yes, with 18% answering no and another 11% felt that it did not apply to them. This includes seventy-eight percent of Caucasians and fifty-five percent of non-Caucasians. It is a positive sign that people feel that the church is more diverse than it was. Since there has been work put into making this a reality, it is significant to note that it has been noticed by those who attend church on a regular basis.

⁷⁷ Answers appear in Appendix C page 154, Appendix D page 164, and Appendix E page 172.

⁷⁸ Answers appear in Appendix C page 155, Appendix D page 165, and Appendix E page 173.

⁷⁹ Answers appear in Appendix C page 156, Appendix D page 166, and Appendix E page 174.

The next question was “Would you say that the church is better off having a diverse congregation?”⁸⁰ Seventy-one percent of the respondents answered yes, three percent (one person) stated no, and twenty-six percent stated that they are unsure. This includes sixty-seven percent of Caucasians and eighty-two percent of non-Caucasians. Although there is a higher percentage of Caucasians who are not sure if the church is better off being more diverse, the person who stated “no” to the question is someone who is non-Caucasian. This shows that there is still work to be done in explaining why diversity is both biblical and important.

The last empirical question was “Do you think that it is important to have diversity in leadership?”⁸¹ Eighty-four percent of the respondents stated yes, with sixteen percent stating maybe and no one stating no. This includes eighty-one percent of Caucasians and ninety-one percent of non-Caucasians. According to this data, it would appear that even some of those who are not sure if the congregation is better off being diverse, would say that if you are going to be diverse, you should have diverse leadership.

The final question was “Do you have anything to share (thoughts, advice, etc.) that would be helpful for us as we seek to be more multiethnic as a congregation?”⁸² There were many encouraging words about what we are doing and the trust that we are following the Lord’s lead and going in the right direction. Here are some quotes from the advice we received (from the individual surveys):

- “If one primary group to minister to is Hispanic, it may need to form a different worship team that God has prepared to play more relevant or our

⁸⁰ Answers appear in Appendix C page 157, Appendix D page 167, and Appendix E page 176.

⁸¹ Answers appear in Appendix C page 158, Appendix D page 168, and Appendix E page 177.

⁸² Question appears in Appendix C page 159.

same songs in a different style. Alternately, our worship team has to put in more time and effort into learning how to do this.”

- “think the Church is welcoming in general, and the effort(s) to increase diversity will make us even more welcoming. Listen with open hearts and ask the right questions.”
- “Talk to respected congregants of different ethnicities (those who will give honest and constructive feedback).”
- “Meet the needs of the current congregation while staying aware of the population changes in and around the church.”
- “Try to implement more cultural events, or services. Try to have fellowship with other churches and help the town around the impoverished areas.”
- “I would say invite pastor of different ethnicities & if any of their members would like to join they are definitely welcome to come and we can show them what we do & show that our goal is to be more multi ethnically & join together!”
- “Discuss and implement ways to bring the congregants of varying ethnicities together for fellowship and sharing of their individual cultures.”

The following insights were also given. “I do believe that we need to know what diversity really means and would look like. I am not sure everyone completely understands what it would be like to be diverse. None of us have been to a church or in any programs where we are the minority.” This is a great insight from someone who has been a part of the church for over thirteen years and is between fifty-five and seventy-four years old.

This also came from a respondent who has been a part of the congregation for more than thirteen years and is between twenty-six and fifty-four years old. “I believe the more multiethnic we become the more we can have a better understanding of different ethnic backgrounds and cultures.” This was discussed in chapter three.

Comprehensive Interviews

I have also chosen six people from the church for comprehensive one-on-one interviews after the questionnaires: three from the majority culture and three from the minority culture, to get some qualitative data on the efficacy of the project. My initial plan was to choose four people, but the interviews took less time than anticipated and there was a desire to get input from a wider variety of individuals.

Each participant was asked seven questions. “What is your age, and how would you identify yourself as far as ethnicity?” “What did you think about the pastor’s feeling that diversity in leadership was necessary for the church to become multiethnic when you heard about it?” “Do you feel that the church is more diverse than it was a year ago? Why or why not?” “Do you feel that diversity in leadership has played a part in whether the church is more diverse or not? Why or why not?” “Have changes come about because leadership is more diverse? If so, what changes?” “Do you feel the church is moving too fast, too slow, or at God’s pace toward becoming more multiethnic? Why or why not?” And “What changes would you recommend moving forward?” These sessions were recorded with the participants’ permission, and all information and quotes have been taken from those recordings.

Comprehensive Participant One

Comprehensive participant one was a seventy-one year old Caucasian female who has been a part of the church for over thirteen years. She is also someone who has been involved in a leadership role.

She agreed with the pastor's view that the church needed more diversity in leadership based on all she had learned and observed in the time she has been a part of the church (that it fit with the church's vision). Regarding the church being more diverse, she said, "Most definitely," and went on to share an example of someone whose parents have attended a few times because of the fact that the service is translated into Spanish. She also mentioned the fact that having the time of prayer at times in five languages has been touching, even if she does not understand what they are saying "you can hear their heart and passion come through."

Regarding changes due to the addition of diversity, one example she gave was the addition of the public reading of scripture in English and Spanish now, as well as the addition of some songs which are now in English and Spanish. Regarding this, she mentioned that anyone who enters the sanctuary on Sunday morning will see the diversity, because they would not be "looking at just a whole group of Caucasians standing up there, but is now seeing diversity up there." In other words, the change is visible. She mentioned that cross-cultural relationships are improving, as well as a comfort level with one another in cross-cultural relationships. She expects that more changes might be recommended once he's been here longer, and able to be here at meetings more regularly.

Do you feel the church is moving too fast, too slow, or at God's pace toward becoming more multiethnic? She mentioned that she felt it definitely is not too fast, as we have taken little steps, seeking to keep at His pace. There are ways she would like to see things move faster, especially with regard to outreach, but understands why it is not happening (like the weather). She also used different examples of a few different families that have been impacted by the church's deliberate outreach to the neighborhood. She also shared about how her relationship with a woman of a different ethnicity has helped her to see things differently.

The final question was "What changes would you recommend moving forward?" She would like to see the issues with the translation systems rectified, as the earpieces project sound beyond the hearer. She would like to see us get more input and ideas from people of different ethnicities, looking at better ways to connect with them. She also mentioned having someone of a different ethnicity on staff (beyond the two ethnicities on staff now). She would like to see opportunities for people of different ethnicities to share their culture. She would also like to see a class to teach Spanish to the English-speaking population.

Comprehensive Participant Two

Comprehensive participant two was a fifty-four year old Caucasian male who has been a part of the church for twenty plus years. He has been involved in leadership in the past.

In answer to the first question, "What did you think about the pastor's feeling that diversity in leadership was necessary for the church to become multiethnic when you

heard about it?” He fully agreed with it, especially seeing how the background of ethnicity in the church has changed over those years.

“Do you feel that the church is more diverse than it was a year ago? He believed that it was, mentioning that it seems like there is a more consistent group of diverse people attending. When asked for clarification on whether he was saying that there was a group of diverse people who were coming more consistently, or whether it was that the service was just more consistently diverse, he thought it was both.

“Do you feel that diversity in leadership has played a part in whether the church is more diverse or not? He has really only seen one change, but is sure that diversity in leadership helps. He thinks that in the past there have been people of different ethnicities who have not stayed as long because they were the only ones of their ethnicity there. He also thinks that if the church can expand to include different ethnicities being represented in leadership, that this would bring about a broader range of diversity.

“Have changes come about because leadership is more diverse? He believes so, although he did not mention any specifically.

When asked, “Do you feel the church is moving too fast, too slow, or at God’s pace toward becoming more multiethnic?” He said that at times it has seemed like it is going too slow, but he knows that the church has sought to follow God’s direction and does not feel that the church has been following a timeline, per se, but trying to follow God’s leading. His statement that things have seemed at times “too slow” has more to do with the modern desire for instant gratification, and a desire to see results immediately when changes are made. And upon clarification, his desire was to see more diversity in the congregation as opposed to programs that the church was offering or changes to the

worship service itself, understanding that the increase in diversity would bring about changes to meet the needs of those who attend the services of the church.

When asked, “What changes would you recommend moving forward?” he said that he did not know what to say, and decided to leave it at that.

Comprehensive Participant Three

Comprehensive participant three was a sixty-nine year old white Caucasian male who has been with the church for over thirteen years. He is also someone who has been involved in a leadership role.

“What did you think about the pastor’s feeling that diversity in leadership was necessary for the church to become multiethnic when you heard about it?” He felt that when it was mentioned that it was a good idea, but he was not sure how well the older members of the church would respond to it (he was speaking of those older than him, in the eighty plus year old range).

“Do you feel that the church is more diverse than it was a year ago? He feels that it is more diverse, and notices this especially around time of the offering, when the volunteers for the offerings are often younger non-Caucasians (the church has youth partner with adults to assist in taking the offering). He mentioned that it is nice to see the diversity in the youth who are taking part in the service, and finds this encouraging.

“Do you feel that diversity in leadership has played a part in whether the church is more diverse or not? He found that this was a tough question to answer. He knows that the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries has brought some diversity, not only in ethnicity but also in age. He feels that this person is more relatable to the youth,

especially to Hispanics, and that his ability to speak Spanish also makes a difference. But he has connected with so many, not only for those who are Hispanic, and has made so many feel welcome.

“Have changes come about because leadership is more diverse?” He mentioned that this is a tough question to answer, and his thought went to the change in scripture reading during the service, which is now done in English and Spanish. He does not know, however, if that would make a difference to someone who is not Hispanic. The question was also asked about the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries’ impact on the leadership team. He agreed that this person brings a different perspective; but he also mentioned that he was not sure that this person is as comfortable sharing his insight (at times) as leadership might hope. It was mentioned that this person is still new (less than a year) and seems at times to be more guarded, “not sure sometimes that he knows how to say it (the different perspective) in a way we would understand.”

One of the perspectives that this participant has learned from the director’s father was the connection of food, speaking of the Christmas service including food and being more extended, which is different than our random potlucks. He reflected on some of what he has learned from his son-in-law, who is Mexican, about the connection between food and culture, and mentioned that it would be nice for some of us to see services such as weddings in a different culture to see what they are like.

“Do you feel the church is moving too fast, too slow, or at God’s pace toward becoming more multiethnic?” He does not feel that we are necessarily moving fast enough. He is unsure of how comfortable our congregation would be with changes to embrace ethnicity even though we say we are. He wondered how comfortable the

congregation would be if it allowed the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries, or someone like him, to run the service as a pastor of his ethnicity would run them for a month.

“What changes would you recommend moving forward?” One of the things that was mentioned was that often the Hispanic churches have greeters at the door, and he mentioned how he will see greeters at Hispanic churches he goes by, and that this might be a good thing. The challenge being that people would need to be willing to sacrifice their fellowship time in order to do this. He also mentioned things that would get more people out of their comfort zones and figure out how to make things work. He mentioned the idea that has been raised about having an ethnic (cultural) day to share food and customs of different ethnicities, expanding beyond just African-American and Spanish culture.

He also wondered if the elders took a break, and allowed people of a different ethnicity to fill those roles, if they (the leaders and those who are Caucasian) would still feel like this was their church. He reflected on the story from Numbers (13-14) when the spies went into Canaan, and the people were not willing to go into the land because those in the land were too big. Could the church be in the same place?

Comprehensive Participant Four

Comprehensive participant four is a twenty-five year old Hispanic male (non-Caucasian) male who has been a part of the church for between five and thirteen years. He is someone who has worked with our youth in the past, and has assisted the church with grounds keeping.

“What did you think about the pastor’s feeling that diversity in leadership was necessary for the church to become multiethnic when you heard about it?” He believed that it was a good idea, that diversity is important in the church, and agreed with the statement that diversity in leadership is necessary for a church that wants to become multiethnic.

“Do you feel that the church is more diverse than it was a year ago? Yes, he feels so, mentioning the service that the church has started in Spanish, and getting to know different Hispanics that have been coming. He also has found that having the music in Spanish and English, as well as having the service translated in Spanish, has made those of Hispanic background feel very welcome. This has brought about an increase in diversity.

“Do you feel that diversity in leadership had played a part in whether the church is more diverse or not? He would say yes, pointing back to his answers from the last question. And regarding the question “Have changes come about because leadership is more diverse?” he was not sure if there had been changes because the leadership was more diverse.

“Do you feel the church is moving too fast, too slow, or at God’s pace toward becoming more multiethnic? He felt that the church was going at God’s pace, and mentioned that the church is doing a great job having everyone worshiping as one, especially mentioning the times when the church sings in Spanish and when there are prayers in multiple languages (currently English, Spanish, Finnish, Greek, and Japanese).

And he did not have any recommendations for things to change.

Comprehensive Participant Five

Comprehensive participant five is a twenty-eight year old female. In her home country of Uruguay she would consider herself European as her grandfather is from Spain and her grandmother is from Portugal. This is typical of people who live in South American countries. She stated that in the United States she would identify herself as a Latino woman (female) who has been a part of the church for three to five years. She has helped out in different aspects of ministry since she joined us.

“What did you think about the pastor’s feeling that diversity in leadership was necessary for the church to become multiethnic when you heard about it?” She thought it was a great idea, especially where the church is located in Fitchburg. When she was asked to be a part of it, she said yes because we need to help everyone to know who God and Jesus is and that everyone is the same no matter the race or color of your skin, that we are all equal in God’s eyes.

“Do you feel that the church is more diverse than it was a year ago?” Yes, because of the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries, because his (fiancé) and his family are here. We have more people joining, although it is a slow process, the church is getting there.

“Do you feel that diversity in leadership has played a part in whether the church is more diverse or not?” She does, but it is not just one person. Everyone has played a part in making this happen. She pointed out that “leadership works to make sure that everyone is sure that we are including everyone, and working to make sure that everyone knows God.”

“Have changes come about because leadership is more diverse?” She felt this was kind of a trick question because she never felt secluded from the church. She has always felt included.

“Do you feel the church is moving too fast, too slow, or at God’s pace toward becoming more multiethnic?” She thinks it is moving perfect and at the right pace. She said that when things move too fast, things fall out of place and everything goes bad, but when we move at God’s place, we are going to get to the place where we see more people and it will be full like we want it to be.

“What changes would you recommend moving forward?” She thinks we are moving in the right direction. She did suggest that we should have more multicultural gatherings and open our doors so that people can get to know who we are and so that people from the outside can see that we are not just a church but a family. We are not just Caucasians, not just white people, but everyone and “we are all here, and we are all the same.”

Comprehensive Participant Six

Comprehensive participant six is a fifty-eight year old black woman who has been connected with the church off and on for between five and thirteen years. Although she has not been a regular attendee, she has helped out in many aspects of ministry, especially outreach events such as our Fun In The Son neighborhood outreach.

“What did you think about the pastor’s feeling that diversity in leadership was necessary for the church to become multiethnic when you heard about it?” She thinks it’s a good thing, because if you are going to bring in people of different cultures, then you

need to see people in leadership that are from those cultures. She felt that it was good for the children of those different cultures to see similar people in leadership so that they can see what they can become. She also mentioned that she agrees with the pastor as he has said that this is Christ's vision for the church. Christ calls all people from all cultures.

“Do you feel that the church is more diverse than it was a year ago?” She feels it is, but it is a small church, and it is a diverse town. She also felt that outreach to people of different cultures was important, something that the church is doing. People will not come if they do not know that the doors are open to them. “As a black woman, I’ve always been, in this town, the only black woman in a church.” She stated that she goes where the Lord leads her, and so far that has been to churches with different backgrounds than her own.

“Do you feel that diversity in leadership has played a part in whether the church is more diverse or not?” She said that it is good to see the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries here. She is someone who does not speak Spanish (her husband is Puerto Rican, but did not teach Spanish to the kids in the house). As far as other diversity in the leadership of the church, she is unaware of whether there are any other leaders of diversity (there are not). However, she thinks the more, the merrier. She thinks that it is important and a good thing.

She was asked why diversity is important. Her response was that it is important for people to know that God's love is unconditional. It does not matter if you are black or white, or what clothes you wear, or your financial status. “We need to get under the umbrella of Christ.” She also mentioned that it helps people to understand one another. This is one world and the people need to get out of their little “nook” and come together.

“Have changes come about because leadership is more diverse?” She likes the dance that has been added in, and seeing the kids involved. Church is a place to celebrate. People need to grow and move on.

“Do you feel the church is moving too fast, too slow, or at God’s pace toward becoming more multiethnic?” It has to be God’s will, and at His pace. “It’s all for His will, His way, and His purpose.” People today rush everything, but she does not feel that it is going to slow. “God’s pace is the way it’s going to be, no if’s, and’s or but’s about it. Period!”

“What changes would you recommend moving forward?” She found that this was an interesting question. It takes money to implement, and she does not think that this is her strength. But after reflection, she mentioned outreach events as opportunities such as Fun in the Son. She was wondering if there was a program that could be considered like that in the winter.

Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries

There was also a comprehensive one-on-one interview with the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries, although different questions were asked of him. “What challenges have you faced in being the first person of ethnicity in leadership at the church? How well do you feel you have been received by the majority (Caucasian) attendees? How well do you feel you (and your thoughts) have been received by the pastor and leadership of the church? Do you feel that the church is more diverse now than when you got here, and what part do you feel the visible diversity of leadership has played in it? What do you see as the strengths in having a diverse congregation?

Weaknesses? Having been a part of this congregation since you got here, are you more encouraged and excited to be a part of a multiethnic congregation? Why or why not? What advice would you have for a smaller mono-ethnic congregation that desires to be more multiethnic?" These are the questions that will be looked at now.

The first question was "What challenges have you faced in being the first person of ethnicity in leadership at the church?" He mentioned that there were many challenges. One of the challenges was that there was nothing set before, so there is no past, no specific plan. He knew that there were other things, but they weren't coming to mind when the interview started.

"How well do you feel you have been received by the majority (Caucasian) attendees?" He said he felt like he was welcomed, and has not received negative feedback from anyone so far.

"How well do you feel you (and your thoughts) have been received by the pastor and leadership of the church?" He felt the leadership has a great understanding of everyone and that there have been open ears and open minds. He feels that the leadership has taken his ideas into consideration. Overall, he feels that his ideas have been received.

"Do you feel that the church is more diverse now than when you got here, and what part do you feel the visible diversity of leadership has played in it?" He thinks that it is slowly getting more diverse, although he is not sure if it has anything to do with the visibility of leadership. He thinks that more people are coming and using the translating devices. Moreover, having more diverse leadership on stage helps because it makes them

feel like they can relate, even just seeing people with the same skin color. He also sees more kids and youth helping out in the service, and he feels that this plays a part as well.

“What do you see as the strengths in having a diverse congregation? Weaknesses?” He feels that the advantages are that you get the different ideas that different cultures can bring, even if they clash. There are a lot of different experiences that you get from the diversity and you can still see that God loves everyone no matter what. But the different experiences can be a weakness because it means that there are a lot of different experiences and backgrounds, traditions and cultures, and the impact of these coming together can create or cause conflict.

The question was asked if those strengths or weaknesses translate beyond the service because of being in a multiethnic setting, transforming people not only by coming in contact with Christ but also transforming them by being involved in a blending of cultures? He has felt that he has learned more about Caucasian people, and has had some stereotypes challenged. But he has found that his perspective has changed. There are differences, but how he thinks now is different than how he felt when he got here.

“Having been a part of this congregation since you got here, are you more encouraged and excited to be a part of a multiethnic congregation?” Personally he goes both ways. It is exciting to see the diversity, there are a lot of different experiences, but he has been used to his Spanish services and he sometimes misses that. Sometimes he wants to hear some more Spanish. But he has found that it is exciting to experience new things and feels that overpowers the feeling of missing his Spanish church.

“What advice would you have for a smaller mono-ethnic congregation that desires to be more multiethnic?” He would say that for churches looking to do this, they need to

do their research on different ways to move in this direction, as well as on the different cultures and ethnicities. They also need to be aware of what they are getting into, and be aware that there will be conflict or different opinions that will make this challenging (“a rough path”). It is not something that everyone is doing, it is new and different so it is apt to be rougher.

Actual Church Data

This survey showed that, at least from a perspective standpoint, the church attendees feel that the church is more multiethnic since the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries started. To see if this is actually the case, it is also important to look at the actual data from before the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries first attended the church (January 22, 2017) to see how it compares with data near the end of the thesis project. This data can be found in Table A-1 in appendix F. The week before the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries attended the church, 26% of the attendees were non-Caucasian. This is a similar percentage to what was found on the third week of December 2016, where 24% of the attendees were non-Caucasian. On the third week of December 2017 (a date not affected by holidays or our joint service with the new Spanish service at church), the percentage of non-Caucasian was 30%, and on January 21, 2018, 34% of those in attendance were non-Caucasian. This is a significant increase, even though it is a small sample size. It is also important to note that of the thirty-two new attendees to the church, thirteen (41%) were minorities, eight of those thirteen (62% of non-Caucasian visitors) came because of the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries.

Summary of Research Methodology

The purpose of research was to determine whether adding diversity to leadership would have an effect on a congregation that desired to become multiethnic. In this case study, research tools were used to gain both qualitative and quantitative data, with a desire to determine if the project's hypothesis was correct.

The final chapter will give a summary of this thesis and bring forward the results. It will also look at any other factors or variables that might have affected the results, as well as point out the limitations of this study and potential areas of research. It will also focus on a couple of the unexpected outcomes, such as the potential impact for youth who are a part of multiethnic congregations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

“People do not resist change, per se. People resist loss.”¹ This is a fascinating statement in light of the challenge brought forward in working to become a multiethnic congregation. It stands out because one of the great challenges that a congregation will face when trying to become more multiethnic is that of change. And with that change can come a feeling of loss. As things change, attendees can lament the loss of their favorite music, or aspects of their culture that have been ingrained in them since they were children. Yet, without some change there can never be a blending of cultures. There needs to be an understanding of why a congregation should be willing to lose some of the traditions and comfort in their own service styles to bring about unity in the body. Why is a church looking to become more multiethnic? What is gained by a church that moves in this direction? Without a full understanding of why it is important to be a multiethnic congregation, it will be difficult to get enough buy-in for this to be successful.

There was a church nearby that had a dwindling membership. When their pastor died, they had trouble replacing him. The denomination with which they were affiliated was willing to step in and cover most of the pastor’s salary, but the pastor had to be given the majority of say in changes that needed to take place. This included changes to music. When the congregation heard this, they decided that they would continue to try to find someone on their own. The potential loss of “their” music was enough for them to walk away from change that might have been transformational.

¹ Ronald A. Heifetz, Marty Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2002), 11.

For the Elm Street Community Church, the senior pastor (researcher) believed that God had called them to become a multiethnic church. Along with this calling, the Lord brought different people into the pastor's life to help him understand that things were not always as they seemed. He only had a partial view; he needed relationships with different people to get a clearer view of the world as it is, not as he perceived it to be. It was through this process that he began to understand the significance of the call to become a multiethnic church. The pastor shared this with leadership, who in turn began to see the importance of the church's call to become multiethnic, especially in light of the impact the church's outreach programs were beginning to have. This calling was eventually passed on to the church body, who believed enough in the call to send the pastor back to seminary for further education in multiethnic ministry.

Upon return from his residencies, the pastor began focusing his preaching on the biblical background behind the call to multiethnic ministry, sharing the "why" that God provided in His Word. The pastor passed along summaries of his readings to all in the congregation who were interested, in order to keep the congregation moving in the same direction as Christ was leading him. And through the required classes and recommended readings, the Lord made clear the need for multiethnic leadership. This is important as it shows that the Lord had made clear the "why" to the pastor, leaders, and congregation before major changes were made, so that when the changes came, the people would be ready to make sacrifices for His kingdom.

This case study came out of this call to multiethnic ministry. Furthermore, the Lord brought in a young man who was a perfect fit for this case study in this congregation. This study is not exhaustive, since every congregation and every setting is

different. Further study would be required to see if the conclusions that came out of this study would work for another congregation, especially one that had a different ethnic majority. In addition, this study was conducted in a smaller Caucasian congregational setting of fifty to sixty people (seventy if you include the congregation that has joined the Elm Street Community Church on this journey). This case study could also be repeated in a larger setting to see if there would be similar results for larger congregational churches.

Theological and Biblical Foundations

In chapter two of this thesis, the focus was looking at the “why” from a biblical standpoint. Why should a congregation desire to be multiethnic? Because this is what the church is called to be. In a reversal of the tower of Babel, the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost began the process of breaking down the walls between ethnicities by speaking through people to reach people in their native tongue.

Throughout chapter two it was seen that scripturally there is no reason for the church to be divided ethnically. In fact, the opposite was seen. In the New Testament there is a breaking down of the “dividing wall of hostility”² that separated Jews from Gentiles. It is claimed, multiple times, that in the church there is no Jew or Gentile (the major ethnic division in the early church). The church should be united so that the world would know that the Father loves them, and that the Father sent His Son to die, that all who believe would have eternal life.³ In fact, if there is to be a desire to see His kingdom

² Eph 2:14.

³ John 3:16.

here as it is in heaven, there needs to be a willingness to sacrifice for the Gospel, and a willingness to see the body united, as scripture shows heaven to be.

In looking at scriptures that focus on the heavenly realm, there is an image of people before the throne praising God from every tribe, tongue, and nation. If this is what it will be like to worship God in heaven, then the church should be seeking to implement this on earth. Seeking to unite the body will require sacrifice; but scripturally we are called to sacrifice for the cross, to sacrifice for love. If we love God, then we will obey Him, and He calls us to love one another.

This call to love one another and to be as one family, brothers and sisters with God as the head, is not an ethnically segregated calling. If the church is to be one family, then we need to connect with one another and be there for one another, as “one” body of Christ. Separating from the body of Christ was something Paul challenged Peter and others about, and is something that modern American Christianity needs to be challenged about as well.

When looking at scripture, it was also noted that there were no signs of exclusion due to racial or ethnic backgrounds. In fact, Antioch, a model early church, is an example of a church with diverse leadership. For those who are called to become more like the early church, that call should include a desire to become multiethnic, as this was the model of the early church.

Literature Review

The literature review in chapter three described why the church of America was and is divided, the call to Christian unity, and dealing with potential conflict that can

come from diversity in the body and in leadership. When looking at the divided church, literature showed that the early American church was divided mostly due to slavery. This division did not begin to improve after the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation. If anything, it got worse (and rightfully so). Now African-American believers no longer had to sit in the back or in balconies. These marginalized believers were now able to establish their own churches and have their own leadership, while bringing their own culture and music into their services.

This division did not change with the Civil Rights' movement of the 1960s either. The fact that most white Caucasian churches were unwilling to get involved in seeing justice for the oppressed kept the divide in place. Blatant racism changed to racialization (a lack of deliberate cross-cultural relationships that leaves barriers between different racial or ethnic groups in place in areas such as experiences, opportunities, and relationships), and the church stays segregated by choice.⁴

The Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP), a church growth model which promoted targeting a particular demographic, prioritizes potential growth over the call to unity in the church. This focus on growth led to a lack of cross-cultural relationships, which caused a lack of understanding or compassion between racial and ethnic groups. This is seen in the differences of opinions in areas such as Black Lives Matter.

With the challenges facing the country and the American church, there is a call to Christian unity and diversity in the church. Authors such as Smith and Emerson, DeYmaz, Rah, and groups such as the Mosaix network have addressed this challenge. These authors have done their research into the scriptures (such as the ones in chapter

⁴ This idea is written about in books noted by Smith and Emerson, Rah, Mitchell, and others.

two) and noted the scriptural challenges to homogeneous churches and the Homogeneous Unit Principle.

As these authors did their research, they found that diversity in leadership was necessary for diversity in the congregation. This is especially true in Caucasian churches because of their history of minimization of minorities and people of non-European ethnicities. An all-Caucasian church that does not allow for diversity in leadership could be seen as continuing oppressive behaviors that have trademarked the church for centuries.

This was seen in the examples from many of the books. Not only is it important that there be multiethnic leadership for unity in the body, but Gilbreath makes it clear that it is not just the diversity in the staff, but a willingness for the leadership to build cross-cultural relationships. There is also a need for pastors, leaders, and congregations to develop cross-cultural intelligence. This does not just happen through cross-cultural relationships, but it comes from a willingness to learn different cultures in every way possible. While learning new things through these relationships, it will also be necessary for us to unlearn some things that we believed to be accurate, but have since learned are inaccurate.

Multiethnic leadership in the body will lead to different types of programmatic outreach, as leadership will begin to see needs that it had not seen before. It will also lead to opportunities for the leaders to be able to address relevant issues dividing ethnicities in the communities in which they are located because they will be working on those issues in the congregation.

Furthermore, any time different cultures come together with different points of reference, there is a high probability that there will be conflict. Since this is something to be expected in a multiethnic setting, research should be done to help leadership, and congregations, deal with conflict as it arises. Books such as *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, and *Leadership on the Line* can be helpful in not only preparing leadership for conflict, but in giving practical steps to deal with conflict when it comes.

Research Methodology

Chapter four included the research methodology and results from the case study. The hope was to see both the perceived and actual results that the addition of diversity to the leadership team, both visibly and behind the scenes, would have on a smaller congregation that desired to become multiethnic. The different forms of research that were used in this study were the following: Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI); a focus group made up of those who are not a part of the majority in the congregation; participation observation from the researcher; a brief Survey Monkey questionnaire offered to attendees of the congregation; and comprehensive one-on-one interviews with key attendees and leaders, including a comprehensive one-on-one with the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries. These different research tools provided both qualitative and quantitative data that gave a better understanding of whether the hypothesis was correct.

The first four pages of chapter four described some of the things that God did to prepare the church to become more multiethnic. There are details of the pastor and

church's call, as well as the preaching and teaching that took place before this case study began. These details were included so that anyone looking at this case study would understand that there was more going on than just a pastor deciding to add diversity by adding a person of a different ethnicity to the leadership team. There were deliberate steps taken, from prayer and preparing the leaders, to preparing the congregation by helping them to understand why this, or any, congregation should work and sacrifice to become multiethnic.

Just prior to bringing on the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries, the church purchased a system to allow for translations. Two different people stepped up to be a part of this ministry. Once the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries started, the church's programmatic changes included adding Spanish scripture reading after English during the service, adding some bilingual songs to the worship music, and making our website bilingual. The Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries is also the one who does the welcome and announcements. Furthermore, since he both plays the piano and sings, he is integral to the music ministry team. These adjustments were well received, as evidenced in the focus group and the comprehensive interviews with some of the non-Caucasian congregants.

From the Intercultural Development Inventory, the church's leadership discovered that it was not as culturally sensitive as it perceived it was. There was a difference between the perceived and developmental orientation. This led to some in leadership asking about what they could do to become more culturally sensitive, while others were made aware of the place in which they found themselves to be. Still others have mentioned that they need to develop more diversity in their friendships and relationships.

It is the church's desire to have more opportunities to develop cross-cultural awareness, something that was seen in the comprehensive interviews with some of the Caucasian participants.

At the end of the summer, a focus group was held to discuss what things the church was doing right, what things the church could improve on, and what priorities should be implemented. The informative time that the researcher spent at Grace Chapel in Lexington, MA, learning what its leadership has done to be intentional in their pursuit of diversity in their congregation, guided the work that was done with the focus group. In light of the understanding gained from Grace Chapel, the focus group was reminded that a church's move to become multiethnic was a process. This view was reinforced as the group was asked to think of the top recommendations to implement over the next five years.

It is the researcher's belief that the focus group did help give the non-Caucasian population of the church an understanding that they are vital members of the congregation whose ideas are just as important as everyone else's. However, as was seen in the non-Caucasian participants of the comprehensive surveys, this population already felt that their input was valued.

Of the things that the focus group thought the church was getting right (mentioned in chapter four), much of what the church is doing right was based around the church's willingness to serve all in the community, regardless of ethnicity. Adjustments to the service were also well received, yet the facts that the church did not require special clothing, and that all people are treated as equals, without judgment, stood out. In the discussion of what things could be done better or differently, the idea of a Heritage Day

came up, as well as some other aspects of the church which could be made multilingual. The most significant point was that there is a need for people to reach out after church to visitors, so that these visitors will know that their presence is welcome, and to pass along the “family-feeling” (that so many of different ethnicities have felt) to those who are new. One surprise was the lack of importance of the condition of the building. It was made clear that the welcoming nature of the congregation was far more important than the condition of the building, or multilingual signage.

When analyzing the one-group, after-only questionnaire, it was learned that the congregants’ perception of the church is that it is more multiethnic than it was a year ago. The majority of the respondents think that it is important for a church to be multiethnic. A welcoming insight was that one hundred percent of the non-Caucasian respondents felt that the church was welcoming to people of different ethnicities. The survey also revealed that everyone who responded stated that visible diversity on Sunday mornings was enjoyable. One interesting point that was made by one of the Caucasian respondents was that the worship team might need to put in more work to make the music more diverse, or the church should look at having more than one worship team to add diversity to music.

Much of what has been stated was confirmed through the comprehensive personal interviews. For the Caucasian participants, discussions around more opportunities for cross-cultural interactions came up, with a desire to be able to learn more from people of different cultures, and receive more input from them. The perception was that things are at least a little more diverse, both through new non-Caucasian attendees and others who now attend more regularly since the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries started.

From the non-Caucasian participants in the comprehensive personal interviews, the feeling was that the church is welcoming to people of different ethnicities, with the changes that have been implemented being received in a way that has made them feel more welcome. Specifically, participant four (a 25 year-old Latino man), stated that he “has found that having the music in Spanish and English, as well as having the service translated in Spanish, has made those of Hispanic background feel very welcome.”⁵ Having people feel welcome is something that all congregations should be striving toward.

Participant six, a 58 year-old Black woman, when discussing diversity in leadership, stated that “it is a good thing, because if you are going to bring in people of different cultures, then you need to see people in leadership that are from those cultures. She felt that it was good for the children of those different cultures to see similar people in leadership so that they can see what they can become.”⁶ Diversity in leadership makes a larger impact than just making people feel welcome. It gives younger minorities something to aspire towards and a visual representation of the reality that they can be leaders in the church.

The recommendations moving forward were twofold: offering different multicultural gatherings that could be used as outreach opportunities to the public, and holding a larger outreach event for the winter as the church’s one major outreach to the public is in the summer. Having the church show that God’s love is unconditional and for everyone came up multiple times.

⁵ Thesis page 96.

⁶ Thesis page 98-99.

Everyone felt that the process was slow, but almost everyone thought that the church is going at God's pace, and that moving and changing at God's pace is what is important. The one gentleman who felt that things were not moving fast enough acknowledged that he did not know how some of the older members would react if things moved faster than they are.

During the comprehensive interview with the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries, it was acknowledged that there were challenges, especially in being a part of creating a new position that had no track record for the position. He mentioned that there were other challenges, but they were not coming to mind during the interview.

He did think that the church's Caucasian congregants have received him well, and that the ideas and thoughts that he has passed along to leadership have been well received. In looking at the diversity of the congregation, he thinks that the congregation is slowly getting more diverse, and that seeing someone on the platform that is non-Caucasian gives different people someone that they can relate to. In this case, it gives people of Hispanic heritage someone they can relate to.

When asked about the strengths and weaknesses of a multiethnic congregation, the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries stated that there are advantages that you get from receiving ideas from different cultures, and that he has seen this personally. The weakness he mentioned is the potential for conflict that can arise from viewpoints that are brought forward from different ethnicities with different experiences, backgrounds, traditions, and cultures. Although he misses the Spanish church and sometimes wants to hear more Spanish in the service, he has found it exciting to experience new things and feels that the excitement overpowers that which he is missing from his Spanish church.

For the demographic from the church services, two weeks were chosen, one from December 2016 and one from January 2017 (before the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries attended the church); they were compared to similar weeks in December 2017 and January 2018. Averaging the two weeks, the percentage of non-Caucasian congregants was 25%. This went up to an average of 32% at the end of this case study. These numbers show that there was not just a perceived increase in diversity, but that the increase is real. The church also increased in average attendance from forty-six in 2016 to fifty-one in 2017. This attendance does not include the individuals who attend the church but are a part of Nashua Valley Christian Church's membership. This increase came from more regular attendance by members of different ethnicities who did not attend regularly before the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries started, those who came with the Director, and those who came who were related to congregants but were not as fluent in English as their family member was.

Final Conclusions

Therefore, the research methodology supported the hypothesis that adding other ethnicities to the church's leadership team, both in planning and on the platform, brought about increased diversity in the congregation that has been striving to become multiethnic. The addition of diversity to leadership brought about changes in the service that were well received, especially by those who are non-Caucasian. It saw increased participation from non-Caucasians who sporadically attended. It also saw 41% of first-time visitors in 2017 come from people who were non-Caucasian.

One of the largest limitations of this study was the small sample size of the congregation. This study would need to be re-created in a larger congregation, and in multiple congregations to see if the results hold true in those settings. It is also important to note that although the congregation did not lose any families during this process, it did have a couple of families leave when the decision was made to become intentionally multiethnic. This happened when the pastor and elders held information sessions during the summer of 2014 to ascertain the church's willingness to take deliberate steps in this direction, as well as its willingness to make the necessary sacrifices so that those of different ethnicities would feel more welcome.⁷

The Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries' Hispanic background fits well with the outreaches of the Elm Street Community Church. However, another limitation would be that only one person of ethnicity has been added to leadership; there are other ethnicities still missing, such as African-American and Asian. The outreaches that the congregation has been running have targeted the neighborhood, which is predominately low-income Caucasian and Latino. The congregation's blending has also been more along these lines, with minimal attendance from individuals or families from African American or Asian backgrounds. However, the small mill city in which the congregation is located has a significant number of African Americans and Asians that make up the population of over forty thousand people. The question of how the diversity

⁷ During these open forums, no discussion was made as to what changes would occur, as there was an understanding that these changes would come from the recommendations of people who were not a part of the majority culture (Caucasian). The thought of change and/or ethnic blending was enough for a couple of families to leave. The reason it is written "and/or" is because none of those who left were willing to state that they were uncomfortable with the addition of different ethnicities, but there appeared to be more discomfort than they were willing to admit.

of the congregation would change if leadership was added from these ethnicities (or other ethnicities) was outside the scope of this case study.

For the Elm Street Community Church, one of the observations resulting from this study is that the congregation needs to look at developing a visitation ministry that more properly mirrors visitation ministries in the cultures that they are reaching out to. The church will also need to determine the best way to implement a Heritage Day that will expand the understanding of different cultures, as well as promote the diversity in the congregation, fostering the understanding that God's love is for all, and that Christ died for His multiethnic bride. Another strategy would be to include guest preachers of different ethnicities. Further tactics might include interacting with congregations of other ethnicities. This would give opportunities to develop cross-cultural intelligence, and present the possibility of holding joint outreach events that might reach different ethnic groups. Another strategy would be to choose a month where different ethnicities are specifically targeted for outreach, with food and events that would be distinctive of those groups.⁸

One area that could use further research as a result of this study would be how to integrate music as a way to blend cultures. There are many different ways that this is done in the multiethnic movement; more research is needed to determine if there are options that would better support a church moving in this direction.

Although outside the scope of this study, there are other questions that arise. Does diversity in leadership bring about changes to philosophy of ministry? How does diversity in a congregation impact or increase cross-cultural relationships? These will challenge stereotypes and bring about a better understanding of challenges that people of

⁸ This concept is a part of the thesis project by Derren Thompson which is yet to be published.

different ethnicities need to deal with (especially inequality and injustice in the minority community). These would be great follow-up studies.

It is also clear that the issue of conflict is, or should be, a concern for a congregation seeking to become multiethnic. When the Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries was asked what advice he would give to a church looking to become multiethnic, he said that he would advise them to do their research on different ways to become multiethnic, as well as to research different cultures and ethnicities. This is wise advice. As has been stated before, the church leadership and members have to know why they are seeking to become multiethnic or the challenges will be greater than the commitment to move in this direction. The books *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, and *Leadership on the Line* are a few helpful books for churches seeking to prepare for conflict before it comes, or for those dealing with conflict.

It is my hope that this study will increase awareness for the need in American Christianity to become more multiethnic. These results, although limited in scope, should encourage other pastors, leaders, and churches to be willing to take the step forward into a challenging but exciting world where the church is being the witness it was called to be. The opportunity to partner with the Lord and this congregation on this project has opened my eyes to how rewarding life and ministry can be if we work together; to see some of the many possibilities and opportunities for change; and to get a glimpse at how a multiethnic church can begin to impact a community. Furthermore, the significant impact that diversity in leadership has on our youth cannot be overstated. This impact happens as they are able to visualize the body of Christ working together,

and as they are inspired by the reality that being of a different ethnicity does not impact their ability to lead and serve in the church. We have come so far, but still have so far to go if we are to be a church that reflects the heavenly kingdom. I look forward to what God has in store as I continue this great adventure, and I hope that you will consider doing the same, until Christ returns or calls us home.

APPENDIX A
INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY



**Intercultural Development
Inventory v.3 (IDI)**

EDUCATION
GROUP PROFILE
REPORT

Prepared for:

Prepared by:

Rodney Cooper, Professor of Leadership, Gordon-
Conwell Seminary

In conjunction with Mitchell R. Hammer, Ph.D.
IDI, LLC

For information or ordering the
IDI, contact:
www.idiinventory.com

The IDI v.3 is developed and copyrighted (2007-2011) by
Mitchell R. Hammer, Ph.D.,
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USA




Introduction

Success in the 21st century in our educational institutions demands the *development of intercultural competence*. Intercultural competence spans both international and domestic educational contexts and is essential for students, faculty, staff and administrators as well as society at large.

A Group Profile

Your IDI Group Profile Report provides valuable information about *orientations toward cultural difference and commonality found within an identified group of three or more people*. These groups can include, for example, teaching departments, classrooms, athletic and other school sponsored groups, the parents of your students and members of the community as a whole. The IDI Group Profile can help you gain insight about how your group makes sense of and responds to cultural differences and similarities. Please be assured that the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is a cross-culturally valid and reliable assessment of intercultural competence. It is developed using rigorous psychometric protocols with over 5,000 respondents from a wide range of cultures. Further, “back translation” procedures were followed in accurately translating the IDI into a number of languages.

The IDI Group Profile identifies the way your group collectively experiences cultural differences. As you review your IDI profile results, your group might consider past situations in which the group attempted to make sense of cultural differences and similarities. Re-framing your understanding of *past events* in this way can help you uncover assumptions that may have guided actions in these situations. In addition, you may wish to focus on a situation or challenge your group is *currently facing* in which cultural differences and similarities have emerged. In education, these challenges can range from changing community demographics, achieving local or national educational learning objectives, graduation rates, curriculum relevancy, as well as school violence concerns. The IDI Group Profile results can help you proactively address these and other concerns as well as increase your own cultural “self-awareness” of your group’s own, unique experiences around cultural differences and commonalities. As you reflect on your IDI Group Profile results, consider the following:

-  **Did the group respond to each of the statements in the IDI honestly?** If so, then the IDI profile will be an accurate indicator of your group’s approach for dealing with cultural differences and commonalities.
-  **Did the group think about their culture group and other cultures with which they have had the most experience when responding to the IDI?** For example, if the respondents thought of some idealized “other culture” with which they have had little experience, then you might consider having these members re-take the IDI.
-  **Have members had or are currently experiencing a significant professional or personal transitional experience (e.g., moving to another country, traumatic event)?** If so, in some cases, their individual responses to the IDI may reflect their struggle with this transitional situation rather than their more stable orientation toward cultural differences. If this is the case, you may consider having these members re-take the IDI at a later date.

Intercultural Development Continuum

Intercultural competence is *the capability to accurately understand and adapt behavior to cultural difference and commonality*. In education, intercultural competence reflects the degree to which cultural differences and commonalities in values, expectations, beliefs, and practices are effectively bridged, an inclusive learning environment is achieved, and specific differences that exist in your institution are addressed from a “mutual adaptation” perspective.

People are not alike in their capabilities to recognize and effectively respond to cultural differences and commonalities. The intercultural development continuum (figure 1 below), adapted from the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity originally proposed by Dr. Milton Bennett, identifies specific orientations that range from more monocultural to more intercultural or global mindsets.

This continuum indicates that individuals and groups who have a more intercultural mindset have a greater capability for responding effectively to cultural differences and recognizing and building upon true commonalities. That is, your group’s success in achieving its educational mission is better served when the members are able to more deeply understand culturally-learned differences, recognize commonalities between themselves and others, and act on this increased insight in culturally appropriate ways that facilitate learning and personal growth among diverse groups.

Monocultural Mindsets

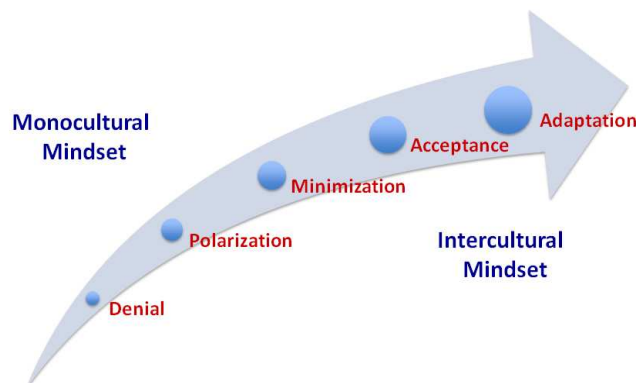
- ✎ Makes sense of cultural differences and commonalities based on one’s own cultural values and practices
- ✎ Uses broad stereotypes to identify cultural difference
- ✎ Supports less complex perceptions and experiences of cultural difference and commonality

Intercultural/Global Mindsets

- ✎ Makes sense of cultural differences and commonalities based on one’s own *and* other culture’s values and practices
- ✎ Uses cultural generalizations to recognize cultural difference
- ✎ Supports more complex perceptions and experiences of cultural difference and commonality

The specific competence orientations identified in the developmental continuum are Denial, Polarization (Defense & Reversal), Minimization, Acceptance, and Adaptation (figure 1). The IDI also measures **Cultural Disengagement** as a separate dimension. Cultural Disengagement is not a dimension of intercultural competence along the continuum. Nevertheless, it is an important aspect of how people relate to their own culture group and other cultures.

Intercultural Development Continuum

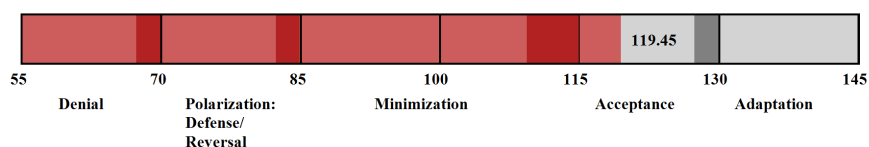


SUMMARY ORIENTATION DESCRIPTIONS

Denial	<i>An orientation that likely recognizes more observable cultural differences (e.g., food) but, may not notice deeper cultural differences (e.g., conflict resolution styles), and may avoid or withdraw from cultural differences.</i>
Polarization	<i>A judgmental orientation that views cultural differences in terms of “us” and “them”. This can take the form of:</i>
Defense	<i>An uncritical view toward one’s own cultural values and practices and an overly critical view toward other cultural values and practices.</i>
Reversal	<i>An overly critical orientation toward one’s own cultural values and practices and an uncritical view toward other cultural values and practices.</i>
Minimization	<i>An orientation that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that may also mask deeper recognition and appreciation of cultural differences.</i>
Acceptance	<i>An orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference and commonality in one’s own and other cultures.</i>
Adaptation	<i>An orientation that is capable of shifting cultural perspective and changing behavior in culturally appropriate and authentic ways.</i>
Cultural Disengagement	<i>A sense of disconnection or detachment from a primary cultural group.</i>

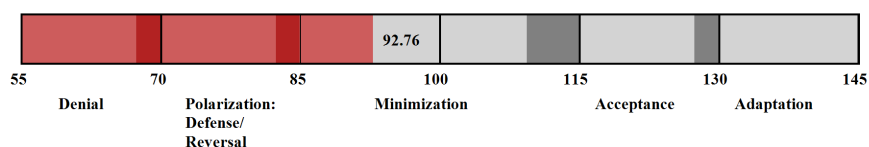
IDI Group Profile

Perceived Orientation (PO)



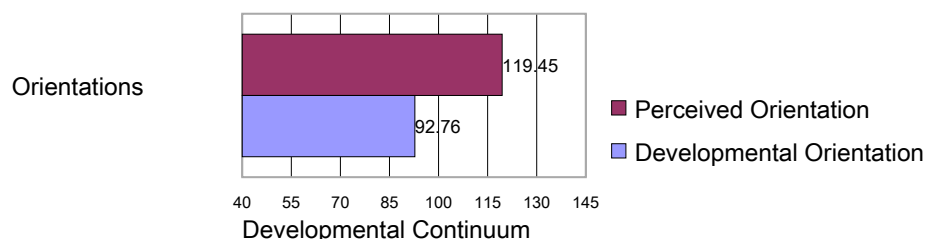
The group's Perceived Orientation Score indicates that the group rates its own capability in understanding and appropriately adapting to cultural differences within Acceptance, reflecting an orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference in one's own and other cultures in values, perceptions and behaviors.

Developmental Orientation (DO)



The IDI's Developmental Orientation Score indicates that the group's primary orientation toward cultural differences is within Minimization, reflecting a tendency to highlight commonalities across cultures that can mask important cultural differences in values, perceptions and behaviors.

Orientation Gap (OG)



The Orientation Gap between the groups' Perceived Orientation score and its Developmental Orientation score is 26.69 points. A gap score of 7 points or higher can be considered a meaningful difference between where the group perceives it is on the developmental continuum and where the IDI places the group's level of intercultural competence.

A Perceived Orientation score that is 7 or more points higher than the Developmental Orientation score indicates the group has overestimated its level of intercultural competence. A DO that is 7 points or more than the PO score indicates that the group has underestimated its intercultural competence. The group substantially

overestimates its level of intercultural competence and may be surprised their DO score is not higher.

An Education Example

An IDI Group profile of 25 school administrators indicates that their Developmental Orientation is at Minimization. It is likely that, overall, the group's current (Minimization level) efforts at building understanding and awareness of cultural differences and commonalities within the school environment is effective at times and less effective in other situations. Further, there is likely a sense (especially around issues of equal treatment and tolerance of cultural differences) that the educational institution is on the "right track" in creating an inclusive, multicultural community. However, a likely "blind spot" is that the group's efforts at establishing common goals, policies, and practices in the organization may not attend as deeply as needed to cultural differences and integrating those differences in the solutions generated. It is likely that the group will struggle with making decisions and solving problems when cultural differences arise that demand creative solutions in ways that value the differences. The group's level of intercultural competence suggests they will likely be challenged to identify cross-culturally adaptive policies and practices that can guide common efforts across differences.

Range of Developmental Orientations

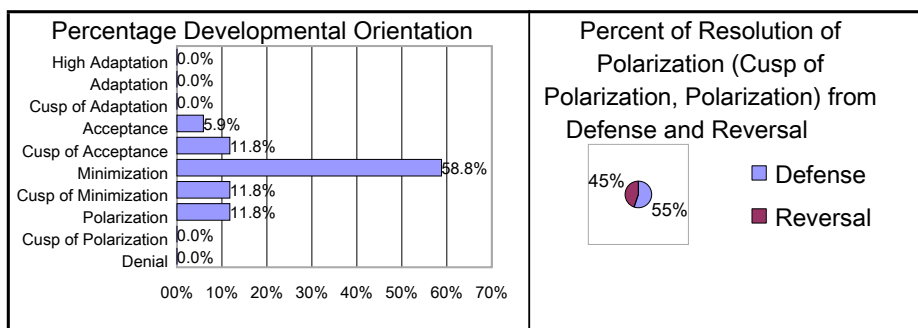


Chart A identifies the percentage of the group whose Developmental Orientation falls within each of the Orientations. Chart B indicates the percentage of Resolution of Defense and Reversal Mindsets among respondents whose Developmental Orientation is Cusp of Polarization or Polarization.

A narrow range of Orientations suggests the group has a more consistent perspective they use when confronted with cultural differences and similarities. When this narrow range exists within Acceptance or Adaptation, the group would more likely demonstrate relatively consistent perceptions and behavior that is generally adaptive around cultural

differences. One key is how many members possess an “intercultural/global mindset” (i.e., Acceptance and Adaptation) as these members represent particularly helpful perspectives that can aid overall competence development of the group.

A wider range of Developmental Orientations (e.g., from Denial or Polarization through Acceptance or Adaptation) within the group reflects a lack of consensus on how the group makes sense of and adapts behavior to cultural differences and commonalities. In effect, the group has both monocultural mindsets and intercultural mindsets at work. Without targeted, intercultural competence development of the members of the group, it is likely the group will find it difficult to achieve a “shared vision and focus” for meeting educational objectives in a culturally diverse environment.

Trailing Orientations

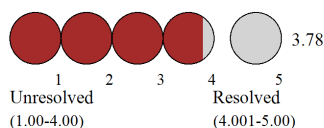
Trailing Orientations are those orientations that are “in back of” the group’s Developmental Orientation (DO) on the intercultural continuum that are not “resolved”. When an earlier orientation is not resolved, this “trailing” perspective may be used to make sense of cultural differences at particular times, around certain topics, or in specific situations.

Trailing Orientations essentially represent alternative “currents” that flow through an educational institution. When trailing issues arise in a school, a specific situation or decision is then made from the perspective of this “earlier” orientation rather than the Developmental Orientation or mindset that characterizes the predominant way the group deals with cultural difference challenges. When this happens, there is often a sense that “we have been going one step forward and now we just went two steps back.” When a group has trailing orientations, it is not uncommon for “progress” in building intercultural competence to have a “back and forth” quality in the school setting, as these earlier orientations arise. As the group begins to “move past” or resolve the trailing orientations, a more consistent sense of progress and “shared focus” emerges.

Below are graphs for each of the orientations that come before the group’s Developmental Orientation. Scores of less than 4.00 indicate a Trailing Orientation for the group because they are not “resolved”.

Trailing or secondary orientations for this group is/are

Reversal Trailing Orientation



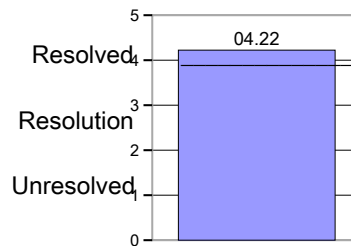
As a Trailing Orientation, there are certain times, topics or situations that Reversal may arise (an orientation that views cultural differences in terms of “us” and “them” in which an overly critical view towards one’s own cultural values and practices and an uncritical view toward other cultural values and practices).

Leading Orientations



Leading Orientations are the orientations immediately “in front” of the group’s primary (developmental) orientation. The Leading Orientations for this group are Acceptance through Adaptation. Acceptance is focused on both increasing cultural self-awareness and learning culture general and culture specific frameworks for more deeply understanding patterns of difference that emerge in interaction with people who are from other cultures. In addition, Acceptance involves the capability to make moral and ethical judgments in ways that take into consideration other cultural values and principles as well as one’s own cultural values and principles. As the group begins to more fully recognize and appreciate cultural differences, it is well positioned to look for ways to shift cultural perspective and adapt behavior around cultural differences.

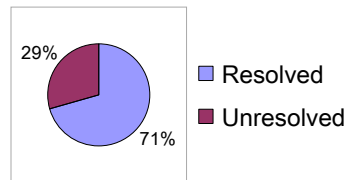
Cultural Disengagement



Cultural Disengagement

Cultural Disengagement is a sense of disconnection or detachment from one's cultural group. Scores of less than 4.00 indicate the group is not "resolved" and is experiencing to some degree a lack of involvement in core aspects of being a member of a cultural community.

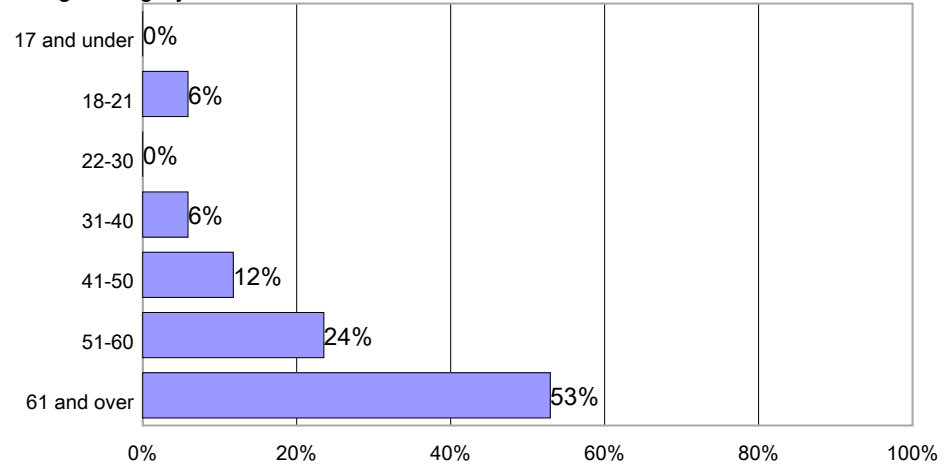
Cultural Disengagement



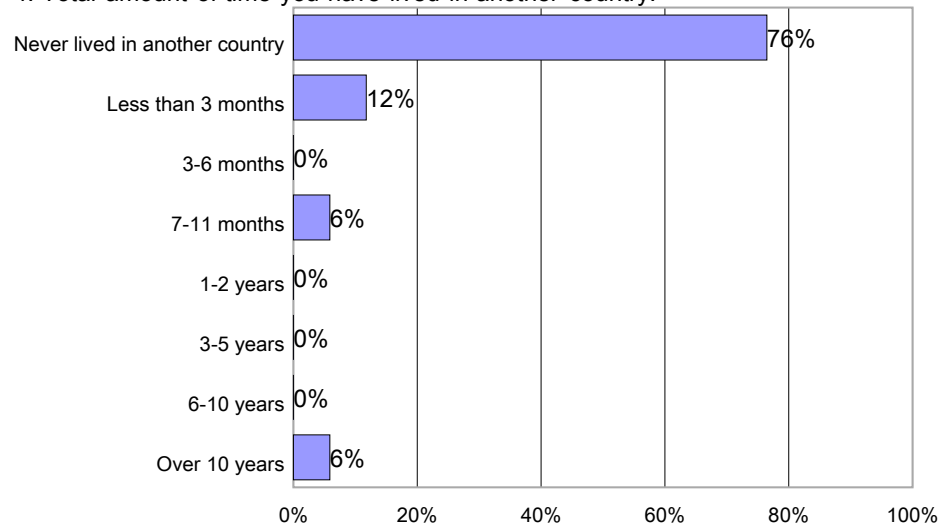
This chart lists the percentage of respondents who are either Resolved (experiencing no sense of being disconnected from a primary cultural group) or unresolved (experiencing a sense of disengagement from a primary cultural community). Overall, the group's Cultural Disengagement score is 4.22, indicating the group is Resolved.

IDI Group Profile
Demographic Information

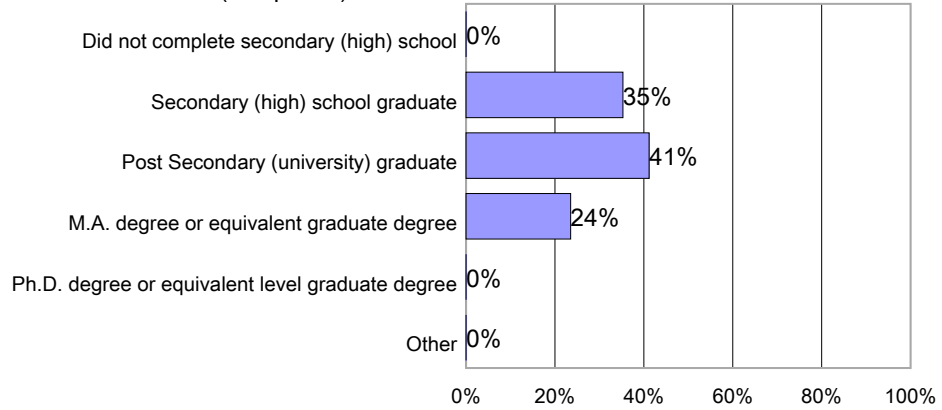
3. Age category:



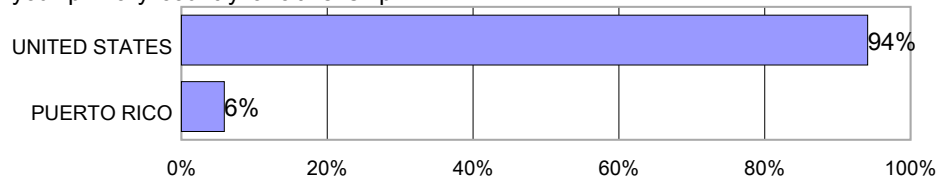
4. Total amount of time you have lived in another country:



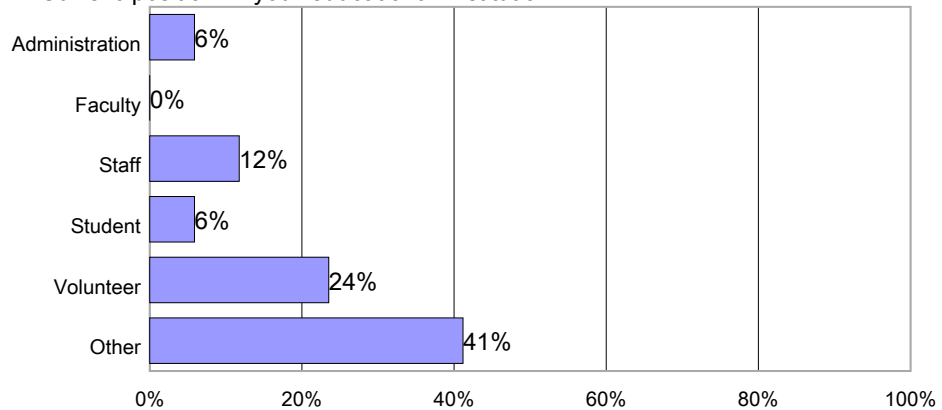
5. Education level (completed):



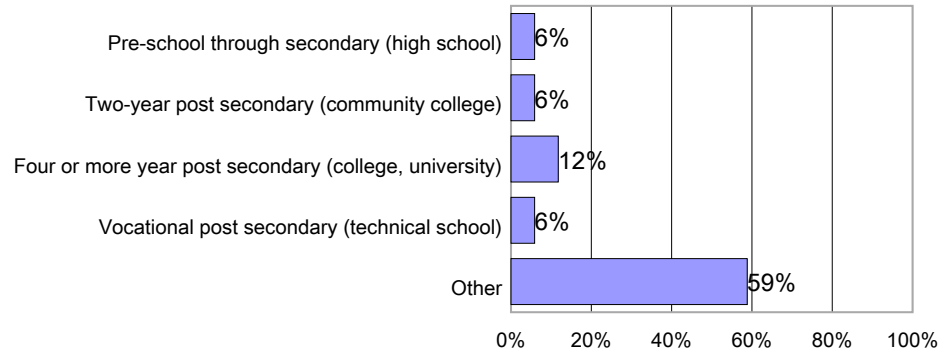
6. Country of citizenship (passport country). Indicate the country that you consider your primary country of citizenship.



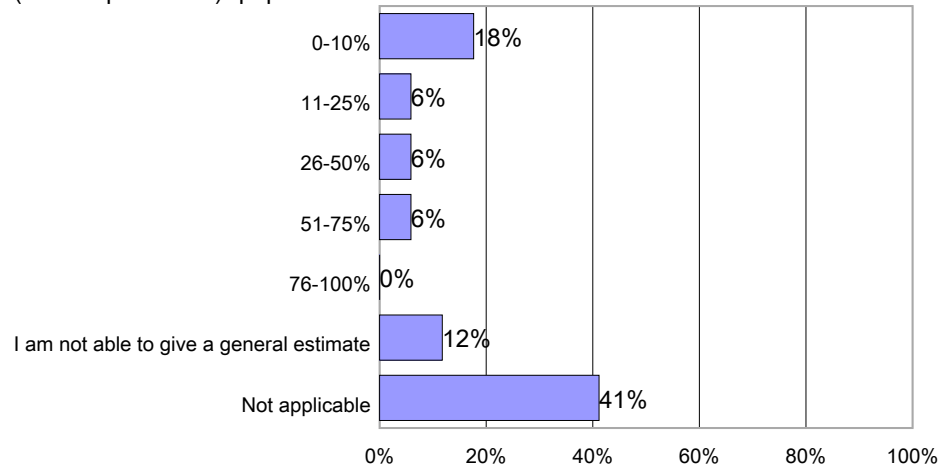
7. Current position in your educational institution:



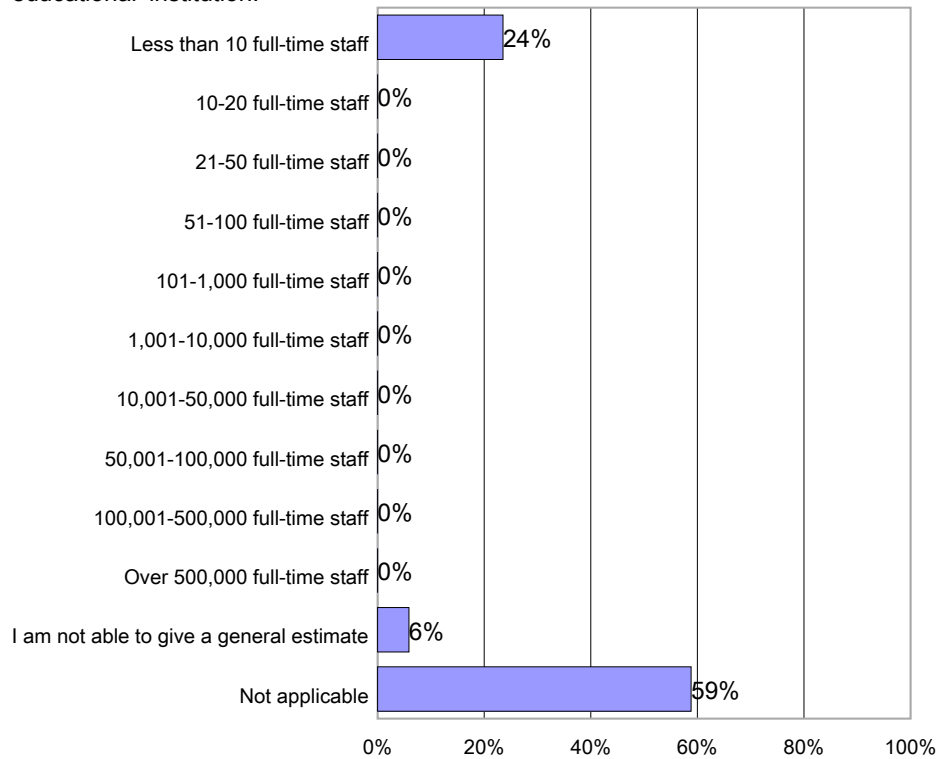
8. Kind of educational institution:



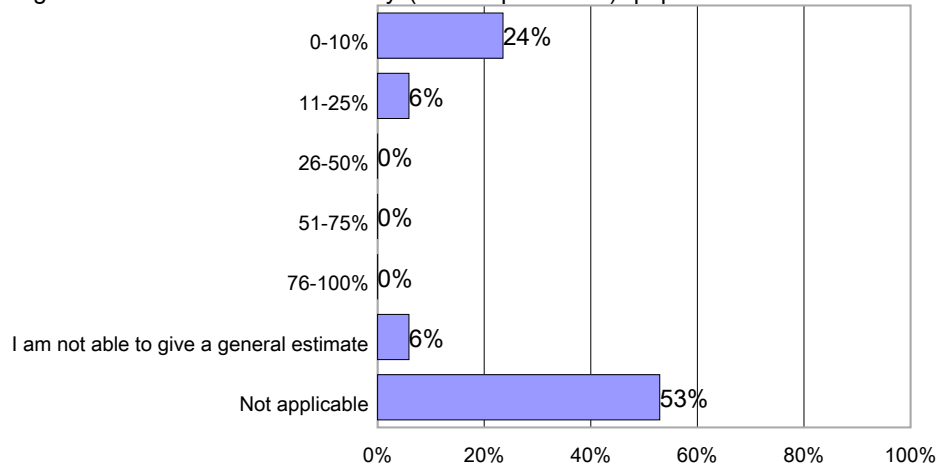
9. Percentage of students who are international (visa holder) and minority (underrepresented) populations:



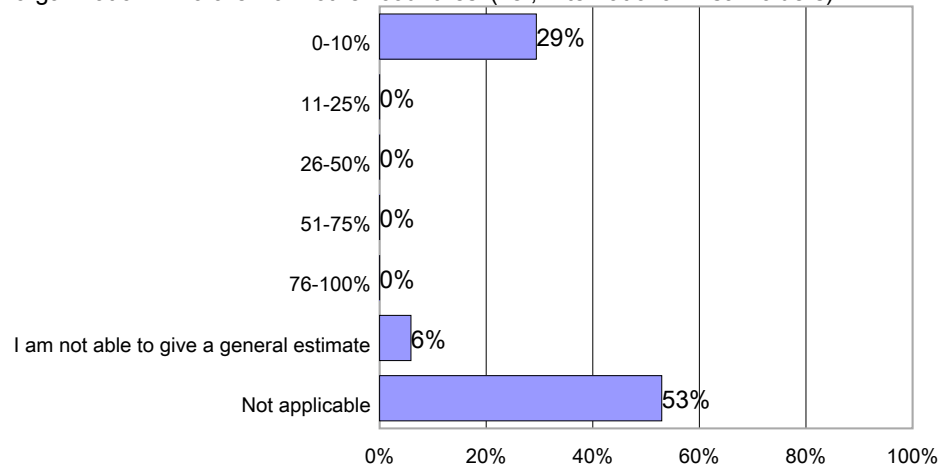
10. Number of full-time administrators, teachers and support personnel in your educational institution:



11. Percentage of administrators, teachers and support personnel (staff) in your organization who are from minority (underrepresented) populations:



12. Percentage of administrators, teachers and support personnel (staff) in your organization who are from other countries (i.e., international visa holders):



APPENDIX B

ETHNIC FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT

Ethnic Focus Group - Sunday, September 24, 2017

Facilitator – Stephen D. Mayo

Dictation – Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries

Focus Group Participants

Focus Group Participant 1

Focus Group Participant 2

Focus Group Participant 3

Focus Group Participant 4

Focus Group Participant 5

Facilitator:

Introduce yourself. Kind of Who you are, where you were born, where your family is from, and maybe a little bit of your church experience.

Focus Group Participant 1:

Did you say we could mention our names? My name is (Focus Group Participant 1), I am from Colombia, I was born there, partially raised there. And most my life I've been raised in America. I grew up in a predominantly Catholic church from Colombia and then transitioned over here, but also Spanish church, dominantly Spanish. Then to a Predominantly Latin American church here. I attend Elm St church here, more frequently as well where is more American based, right. Is that it?

Facilitator:

Age

Focus Group Participant 1:

Im 31 yrs old. I just had a birthday a couple days ago.

Focus Group Participant 2:

My name is (Focus Group Participant 2). I am 23 yrs old. I was born in Brooklyn NY. My parents were born & raised in Puerto Rico. I grew up mainly in the Catholic church, I transitioned into the Pentecostal church at the age of 15, and when I moved to Mass, I started going to the Spanish church and this is my 1st experience with a predominantly American church.

Focus Group Participant 5:

My name is (Focus Group Participant 5), I'm 50 yrs old. I was born in PR. I've been living in MA for 11 yrs. I have 40 years in the ministry. I was a pastor in Puerto Rico, I started a church in Leominster. I am now starting a church here in Fitchburg.

Focus Group Participant 3:

Hi, my name is (Focus Group Participant 3), I'm 28 I was born and raised in Uruguay, South America. We moved here, well my dad moved here first. I then moved here when I was 15 going to 16. I was raised into the Catholic church. I actually wanted to be a teacher for a Catholic church, but then I moved here and everything changed 'cause I was showed different things and I didn't like it, so I switched gears. Actually I always refused to learn English because I wanted to move back to Uruguay, so that was my rebellious act to the world, cause I didn't want to be here, and you know I could understand but I didn't want to speak with anyone. So I started going to school I finished high school. I wasn't into church... I wasn't into anything. I was going to Catholic church with my mom here & there but I wasn't feeling anything. I wasn't getting what I feel when I get here that is spiritual. I guess that's something that I feel that I can't explain. And I really like it and I hope that ____ my daughter is able to feel the same I feel when I come here. I started coming here in 2014, one of the ladies from church she invited us to come here for Christmas Eve and that was the day when I heard Pastor Steve saying how God I remember very well in the podium he's talking, it's just the light on him and he's just saying how God will forgive you you know, and he forgives all your sins, and this is you know if you want to start fresh today is the day, and I was just crying and my eyes are crying & I was like oh God why am I crying here this is not good. So then oh wow this is where I belong, this is where I want to be in. So I started coming, it took me awhile until I was coming fully like coming every Sunday because I was afraid of the change, cuz you know white church, you feel that most Americans feel like do I belong here, I'm afraid just speaking in front of people, but as I started to get to know you know each and every one here, I consider them as my second family. Like My church family, and I'm very blessed to be here and everything you know the church has done so much for me, Pastor Steve, Mrs. ____, everyone, so I'm forever grateful for that so yea, that's it.

Focus Group Participant 4:

My name is (Focus Group Participant 4), I'm 23 and I was born in the Bronx, NY. My mom was from Puerto Rico she was born over there, and my dad is from the Dominican Republic. My church experience has been everywhere. I went to church as a kid well barely, you know I went to some Spanish churches but I don't remember. That was the case it was just cause of my mom, but um when I started to grow older I went to Bethesda Baptist Church for I think 1 or 2 years until I realized that eigh, that wasn't for me and I was a middle schooler high school student so mind that. I started coming to Elm Street I

think it was in '09 or 2010, no '09, I think, and it was a couple friends that used to live here, not anymore that told me to go to this JAM and I went over there and got food and I started coming to Sunday church and then you know I think its been like a couple 7 years. I think I've been here you know so I predominantly American I haven't that's all know besides when I was a kid thats all I know. Thats it from me so.

Facilitator:

Alright so I'll hand this to you .

So thank you the questions that were gonna ask are pretty basic.

The first question is what are some of the things that this church is doing well. Or changes that we've made that you think could make people of different ethnicities feel welcome.

Focus Group Participant 2:

Um so, something that I really im enjoying now is that like during devotional we sing songs that are both English and Spanish. And now, (Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries) reads the Bible as well in Spanish so to me personally, um, when he's reading the Bible in English I listen but I actually can't catch a lot of it and my first language is English. But when he reads it in Spanish it's just like a comfort that I have, and I understand it 100 times better just because of the language difference.

Focus Group Participant 1:

Yeah what I like about the Elm Street Church is the serving of other people. The meals, the programs, the open door of letting people come in and serve them and that's pretty cool you know about Elm Street and i really look up to you guys for that. That's the main thing that I see, the serving to others, um and really quick I want to clarify in my introduction, i grew up in a catholic church but 6 years ago, I actually converted to a Christian and I was born again, you know was lost, so just wanted to clarify.

Facilitator:

So when you say serving youre talking about the fact that we serve everyone not just certain people.

Focus Group Participant 1:

Yeah, specifically, yea. It's because its a open door for everyone to come in and really be with each other get to know each other and that's an important aspect to have. It's more welcoming that way.

Focus Group Participant 2:

Translating Spanish to English

Focus Group Participant 5:

(Spanish)

What they're doing already they're doing great.

The fact that were able to translate services.

Giving the opportunity to give Spanish service within the Elm Street Church.

Focus Group Participant 3:

I do have to agree with what (Focus Group Participant 1) said. About how welcoming the church is you can come in any day especially wednesday when you guys serve meals and you can see anyone here. And that's what I really like because once you start like coming to church and knowing what God is all about that's when you start seeing were all equal, and that's what I like about this church, it doesn't matter how you're dressed, anything, were all equal here and that's what I really like and you know as a mom I feel like that's really great to show that to your kids that were all equal were all the same and when she comes here she doesn't have to feel that she's pressured to wear clothes or brand name anything because that's not who we are here at Elm Street. That's just you know.

Focus Group Participant 4:

All the ideas have been taken. I guess i can say that the leadership, leadership. Cause when you look at the leaders you know everyone is different cultures and that's what I like about it. You could be like you could be a leader in some way it doesn't matter how you look the way you dress the way you talk. You know, I was a youth leader for a while so before the youth group that just shows how the church is accepting so you know that was my input on that question.

Focus Group Participant 5:

One of the things I really liked is that what is being preached here (Elm Street) is very biblical. In some churches pastors take the time on sermons to criticize people, and I didnt see that here. That makes people be more welcomed.

Focus Group Participant 2:

I do like how we have the Sunday school. One, because that gives the adults the ability to focus on the preaching, but also it gives the kids an opportunity that they can go at their own pace, they don't feel that they don't have to, like, I have to listen to the same thing that mom is listening to and I don't understand what mom is listening to. And even though we kid it down to them it's something that they're going to remember and their going to be excited to go upstairs and their going to be excited to tell their parents at their service.

Focus Group Participant 3:

I also agree on that because I remember when I grew up going to church, I used to fall asleep and my mom used to smack me on the head. Or my grandma cause she used to go to church every sunday like 7am and I used to go with her and if I used to fall asleep I know I would get like bad when I get home. So yea, that gives the bad image about like I don't wanna go to church because I fall asleep and you don't really get the message and I see it as you said with my daughter she's like engaged about learning about God and wants to and she tells everyone about here and she wants to come here cause I remember when I was a kid I don't want to go to church...

Focus Group Participant 2:

The children are the future of the church,
It doesn't matter what ethnicity they are, if you teach them from when they're young they're gonna want to grow and they're going to want to keep coming and experience more things

Facilitator:

Good? Big post its.
Alright, so next is things that we can do differently. Or not even differently, something that we could do anything we could do that might make someone from another ethnicity feel more welcome here.

Focus Group Participant 2:

We could have like a heritage day, kind of like how we do with Fun In the Sun.
Only have like maybe different tables, different cultures, and have like different food, or maybe clothing, that we could learn from different places. Guys, I was made to plan things.

Focus Group Participant 5:

(Spanish) What again?

Facilitator:

To make the church more welcome to ethnicity

Focus Group Participant 1:

One of the things I had in my mind, maybe like translating the message into any language you want it to, you know maybe like spanish.
Um like Christian was doing that one day, but I think it was kinda hard saying in English and then saying in Spanish back and back, but what I think also would attract other

ethnicities, this service will also be in Spanish, I've seen big churches where they provide headsets.

Facilitator:

Well, You know we do that.

Focus Group Participant 2:

We have some.

Focus Group Participant 1:

You do that I didn't even know that, you guys are already doing a good job, I didn't know you guys were doing that. That's pretty much I was gonna say you know I didnt even know you guys were doing that. So, I'm done talking.

Facilitator:

Well, you made a really good point though, it means that we haven't made it well enough know that it is available.

Focus Group Participant 2:

We have to voice it.

Focus Group Participant 3:

Well, when I invited my parents. I ask them to come in and to let me know you know what their thought about me the job how I did, we can do that with you we can give you a headset, and you can hear what I'm saying and if you feel the message what im saying, but if you understand the message because that's always the goal because I ask my sister. Did you understand the message, she left crying so I know she understood the message. I'm always crying too, I was like I don't care.

Focus Group Participant 2:

I was actually, I was hearing you was able to hear little pieces that you were translatting today.

Focus Group Participant 3:

How??

Focus Group Participant 2:

I don't know you were really loud, so I just heard you.

Focus Group Participant 3:

You should tell me then. I always ask PS not to give me the paper, because I get more confused, so I just really listen to the message and he's doing the handshake just go and sometimes I get the message and I'm like keep going pastor.

Focus Group Participant 2:

I'm like laughing and CJ is looking at me like, and I'm like I hear Angela.

Focus Group Participant 3:

I didn't know, I'm sorry.

Focus Group Participant 2:

No, but it was great because, obviously I understand him but I also understand you. So I see that it's the exact same thing, so it's not like you're just having this whole different message, and he's over here, no you guys both come together and it flows so well.

Focus Group Participant 3:

Yeah cause I always say that as long as I know the scriptures, I'm good. I let him know I don't want to know the message because it feels like I already know and I'm not gonna receive the same way and when he's like just saying the message it's like okay, and then I feel like oh wow this is a really good message.

Facilitator:

Well, all my notes are only about 50 percent.

Focus Group Participant 3:

Exactly, yeah.

Facilitator:

So, I have those but I don't always go. So along the lines with this question the thought is cause we've had some people invite other here before translation, we've had people to invite friends who come, they'll be here once. Is one of the things, that me and Anwar were talking about it once at one point. It's just the idea that a lot of the people that are coming who are of different ethnicities have come because of the relationship we've built, I mean we had a relationship long before whom have really connected here, but we've had people who just come in and they don't necessarily stay with the connection that so what were trying to get from the question is that are there other things that we could do for that person that you invite that they're gonna come in that they see or hear that would make them go feel more welcome, that might make them say oh, I feel like I'm home like you were saying about hearing the translator or hearing the scripture done in Spanish, I

can connect with that different, either from a visual standpoint coming in or from a connecting standpoint that would make someone go wow I want to come back.

Focus Group Participant 3:

So, you know how we do the scripture in Spanish, most of the time (Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries) reads it in English and Spanish. Then we also have one of the older ladies, she's Greek, maybe we can ask her you know to read in her language or in Finnish or like one of the other ladies too. Maybe every other weekend, instead of just being Spanish we can have them bring the message in their language too because at the end of the day like Pastor Steve said he wants to do this to make everyone feel welcome, so not just in Spanish. So, like one week in Greek and next in Spanish just so everyone feels welcome. You know I can't translate in Greek or Finnish, but I can do the Spanish.

Focus Group Participant 1:

Yea, I think like (Focus Group Participant 3) said, it's so people feel welcome. How does somebody feel that way when it goes somewhere by relationships. How do we get that person to be in a relationship, as a friendly relationship would be to reach out to them and say: Hey how's the service, hey what you think of this, and it'll start a dialogue and you could get close to that person and one thing will lead to another and then all of a sudden they're like impacted by the church, by everybody else, and then they become more oriented to the Lord, the scripture. That's kinda the way I see in in myself, that's how I came to the Lord. Somebody introduced me to the Lord and then told me the story of the Lord and then I was impacted and then somebody else came for me and told me about the same story within the same church and it became this huge relationship and that's how i felt comfortable at this church. So I guess a keep in that relationship will make more welcoming. That's the way I see it for myself, because I was terrified going to church before.

Focus Group Participant 2:

Maybe we could visit people at their houses. Not just leave the relationship here within the church, we could take the relationship out of church. We can make lunch, it doesn't have to be going to the house you can plan something. You don't want them to feel that you're only speaking to them because we go to church together so let me just talk to you cause were here. You want them to feel welcome even when they're out of church. Same thing like if you see someone in the street that haven't come to church in awhile. Talk to them invite them again. Be like hey we have new things coming, new things starting. We have to make everyone feel at home, but not just here, we could be at home anywhere.

Focus Group Participant 1:

I have a story of this kid. He was gonna get married and baptized. He never got baptized because of scheduling. I ask him hey did you get baptized and he's like no. How come? Because of work. I'm like okay. I ask him do you understand why you're getting baptized. He says no. I'm like why's that. How does that work? Nobody has reach out to him and really build that relationship. Not so much really like Hey, this is what God says this is what the Bible says. More like you say "Pastor Steve". Starting the relationship and then gradually telling him about the Lord and stuff like that. The way of life, and thats key I think. Having a relationship with somebody, keeping it, maintaining it.

Facilitator:

Anything to do with the..

Focus Group Participant 3:

People are afraid when you talk to them about God. Because unfortunately some people have given the wrong image about God. I don't wanna be generalizing but mostly I'll have to say when I moved here I was invited to a lot of Spanish churches and they have a different approach and I didnt feel welcome I didn't feel like I belonged there I didn't get the message I was not clicking and one of the reasons because most of the time like I have told you before they focus more on like okay, this is how you have to dress, this is how much money you have to give me, and this is what we're gonna do and you have to follow this. But that's not who I am because if the bible tells me one thing and then you want me to change I'm not gonna change because you want me to change Im gonna change because God wants me to change and that's how it feels in some of the churches and when I push to my friends the minute they're like Oh church, no thank you, and you try to explain to them you know and I don't force them, I don't force anyone to come to church, I talk to them and I don't know how to keep that conversation with people because I want people to be like oh man I see (herself) they know shes going to talk about church and God. Its like, I don't know how to balance that because I want them to come here because I want them to feel the same way I feel but it's so hard because people are like No I don't want to, because people wanna keep doing the same thing they did a long time ago and they don't wanna know God because God is gonna change me he's gonna make me this bad person, because that's the image that most have. You're not gonna be good, you're gonna turn into the hypocrite and you're gonna be this horrible person thats like Oh you do this (herself) and yea I did that before but I don't do that anymore because i know that's not the right thing I know that that's not who I wanna be anymore so it's hard for me to keep that conversation that flow going with people.

Facilitator:

Anything with regards to the church itself. Physical church.

Focus Group Participant 1:

How do you mean?

Focus Group Participant 2:

Like how it looks?

Facilitator:

Well, how the church looks more than how we look.

Focus Group Participant 2:

Translating to Spanish

Facilitator:

Appearance

Focus Group Participant 2:

I don't really think that that matters to be honest. When I go to church I'm not like oh my god the little white building across the street on the corner. It doesn't matter how it looks, it matters what we get from it, what we feel in there. The building itself, like the Spanish church like were in the cafeteria, I don't care where we are. I care what I feel when I'm in here you know. So I honestly I don't think that the appearance matters at all.

Facilitator:

Okay, no that's great to hear because that's, there's different opinions on that. Especially in a white culture so, it's great feedback.

Focus Group Participant 3:

One thing that when you tell people it's like Oh what church is it? The white church. Oh I didn't notice there was a church in there. I think it's great I mean we have the cross there, I really like that a lot, because if you're walking and you see that it's like okay.

Focus Group Participant 2:

I don't think that a church, this is like a personal opinion. I don't think the church needs like a statue in front of it to be considered a church. A church could be in a basement, in a regular house, it could be wherever. I don't, maybe cause I grew up on a Catholic church so obviously the first thing I notice in church is the statues and stuff. I don't feel that's a necessity, and that's what a lot of people look for. Oh where are the windows? Where are the statues? Where's the holy water, those are just add-ons we don't, they're not a necessity.

Focus Group Participant 3:

Like when my sister comes here. I ask her do you think we should do something differently or how do you feel about the message. She's like, she even told me that she feel something that she hasn't felt in other church that's why she keeps coming here. She feels like she's very welcomed here, everyone is like, you know she feels really good coming here so it's really good to hear that. I was like okay so, and I asked her I was like this is an opportunity for you to invite people if this is how you feel when you talk to someone and she's like, Yeah, I know... but it's like the same thing - you tell them church? Christian church? and they're like No thank you. But she really likes it here cause I always ask her. She enjoys coming here a lot, I hope she continues to come in.

Focus Group Participant 1:

I think it's interesting the thing about church or physical church. I grew up Catholic so i thought that you only go to church on sundays because that was the good thing to do and that's where God wanted you to be in church and be with him only on Sundays. Then fast track later when I learned what God wants us to do. It totally changed you know we don't need to be in a physical church. I think that a lot of people growing up were taught that way. If they don't see that, they dont think its a real church. What i think that would hold someone in church is they fall in love with the Lords. They need to fall in love with him. That's probably the hardest part, to convey that story to somebody. I mean it's not hard because obviously we know, we love him for what he did for us. But they have to be like cut to the heart to really understand it and yea your church its beautiful. There's nothing wrong with it, i wouldn't change or upgrade anything to it.

Focus Group Participant 3:

I think people suffer because they're afraid of change you know and they wanna stay with the old habits, and that's what happens same thing that's why i don't hang out with some people because they keep doing the same thing and they don't wanna change those habits. It's like okay, i want you to get to know God its like i don't wanna do the same thing that i was doing before i wanna make sure i do the right thing like i said before. Like (Focus Group Participant 1 AA) said it's not just coming to church on Sundays. Talking about God like every minute because like you said before He listens to us all the time no matter where in the car when im driving to work I'll listen, you know i'll listen to music i listen to stuff that i know it's gonna keep me my faith growing. Yea, i dont think theres nothing wrong with the church itself because otherwise.

Focus Group Participant 2:

There's an example, on your way to Bolton, there's like this patch of grass and there signs says: Church without walls. So the people keep going, they park their cars there, they

take seats out and i guess they have church there. Like, theres not even a building. I mean people are just going to a patch of grass and they're learning about God

Facilitator:

Alright, so the final I'll leave it here is. You know looking at this as a long project. We've been working on this like 2 years. Like deliberately preaching on it. We still know its a work in progress. If you guys can come up I'll let you take a pen. We have a few different suggestions that came out. Of things that we can do to make things more welcoming. If you can put like one, two , three, theres only 4 so but one or two, one to three. However you want to do it. Because what we want to do is the idea to just to have you say things and then you go Oh that's nice and then you go on. The idea is that we actually want to make a change and we don't want it to just be a group of ppl telling everyone else this is what needs to happen we want it to be dialogue so part of that is okay You guys have made some suggestions we're looking at things over the next few years we want to potentially implement so I would say for number one so number one is this is what I think you should the first this is the thing that I think we should do second second Dennis we look at it we can begin to look at because I'm going to take this back to our elders say this is kind of our brainstorm this is what we came up with and you know we can begin to look at it that's kind of the final piece and then we're all set unless anyone else has anything to add so as I said I'll leave a pen because

Focus Group Participant 2:

Do you want us to agree in a group?

Facilitator:

No, because everyone of you has said no to the to be different is apt to be different so I just want you to come up and do you got your one two threes and then someone else can grab the pan and they can do their there 1, 2, 3 so you don't do it because someone else is do it I just want you to do what you feel and what we do as will look at what will be able to gauge from that and then will begin to look at our options options we can take to begin to implement in things

I was going to say you've got to put yours up there

Focus Group Participant 2:

Mines kind of just like a fun thing

Focus Group Participant 1:

So Are we rating these?

Facilitator:

Yes, well no say the way we look at if we sit there and look OK coming out of this what does everyone kind of feel is the most important thing that will make a difference what would be the second thing and every person may have to or three things I mean we can look at the numbers but basically what I'm gonna do is I'm going to add up the different numbers and well the one with the lowest number is he highest rated one

Focus Group Participant 3:

I have a question. So we have a Facebook page right we could maybe we can do one like on Spanish and English like a bilingual

Facilitator:

Let's add that in there. Hold on a second Ishmael.

Cause that could change something.

So if you sign something now you see one that you want to change it go ahead Christian already does the Facebook to make sure the Facebook us updated

Focus Group Participant 2:

Can you change my number three to the bilingual

Focus Group Participant 1:

OK I don't know what you just did but I'm gonna go ahead and write something

Facilitator:

Those are kind of together. These two are together.

Focus Group Participant 1:

These two are together?

Facilitator:

Yes so just put a number one in there

Focus Group Participant 1:

It doesn't really matter between these two

Focus Group Participant 3:

Oh you know what I was thinking too. Is like a weekly magazine for those that aren't tech savvy. And maybe do in both English and Spanish and maybe hang it to like the elderly.

Not you guys. I know my mom isn't on Facebook. Just to give her something. Maybe we can you know pass it around like you guys do.

Facilitator:

We would call that a newsletter.
So do we need to scratch this..

Focus Group Participant 2:

Is that consider number 5 too?
She's making it real complicated.

Facilitator:

We're adding things late so it's making..

Focus Group Participant 1:

I still want to keep mind the way that it is

Focus Group Participant 2:

Yeah I'm just writing mine one two three

Facilitator:

Yeah one to three are the important ones

Focus Group Participant 3:

I like this one we should definitely do it.

Facilitator:

Well on the orders that I'm looking at you may find that they may not be quite as high but they may be easier to implement.

So I want to thank you guys for taking an hour out of your day and hopefully you do know that this is our heart and passion to see the kingdom together and the way that that's going to happen is by us coming together so you can turn that off now.

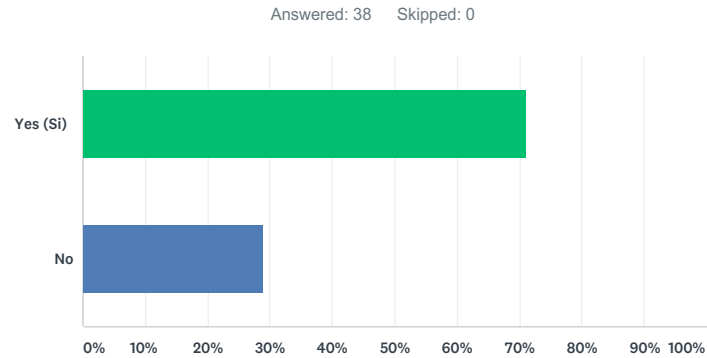
APPENDIX C

MULTICULTURAL QUESTIONNAIRE (ALL GROUPS)

Multicultural questionnaire

SurveyMonkey

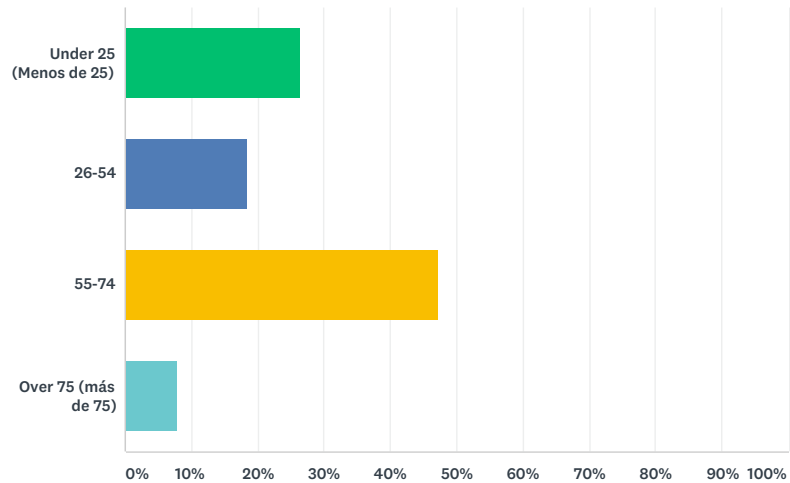
Q1 Would you identify yourself as Caucasian? ¿Te identificarías como caucásico?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	71.05%	27
No	28.95%	11
TOTAL		38

Q2 What is your age group? ¿Cuál es tu grupo de edad?

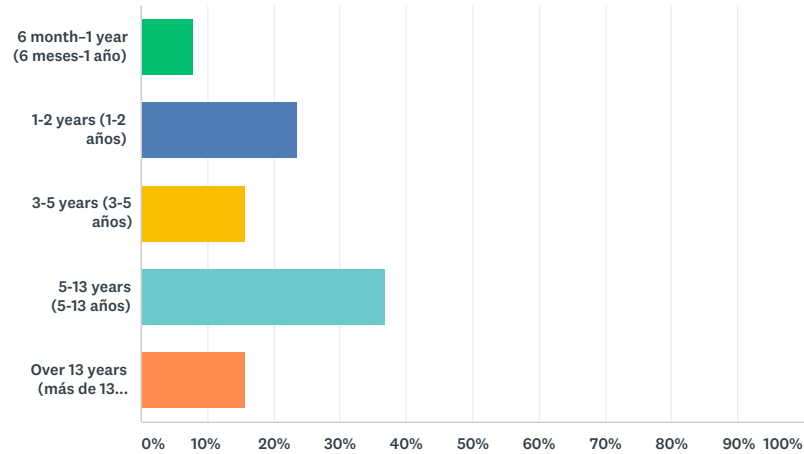
Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 25 (Menos de 25)	26.32%	10
26-54	18.42%	7
55-74	47.37%	18
Over 75 (más de 75)	7.89%	3
TOTAL		38

Q3 How long have you attended the Elm Street Community Church?
¿Cuánto tiempo ha asistido a la Iglesia Comunitaria de Elm Street?

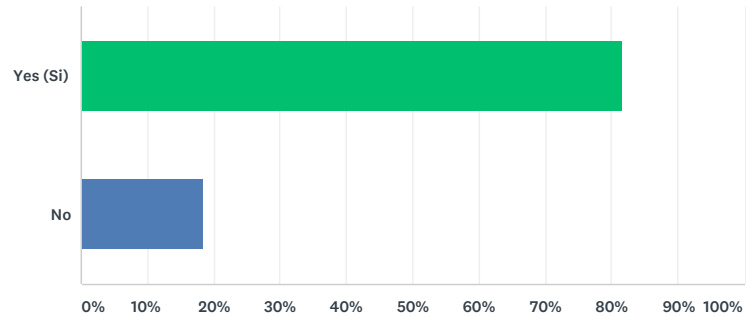
Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
6 month-1 year (6 meses-1 año)	7.89%	3
1-2 years (1-2 años)	23.68%	9
3-5 years (3-5 años)	15.79%	6
5-13 years (5-13 años)	36.84%	14
Over 13 years (más de 13 años)	15.79%	6
TOTAL		38

Q4 Do you think that it is important for churches to be multiethnic (have no more than 70% be from one ethnicity)? ¿Crees que es importante que las iglesias sean multiétnicas (tener no más del 70% en la iglesia ser de una etnicidad?)

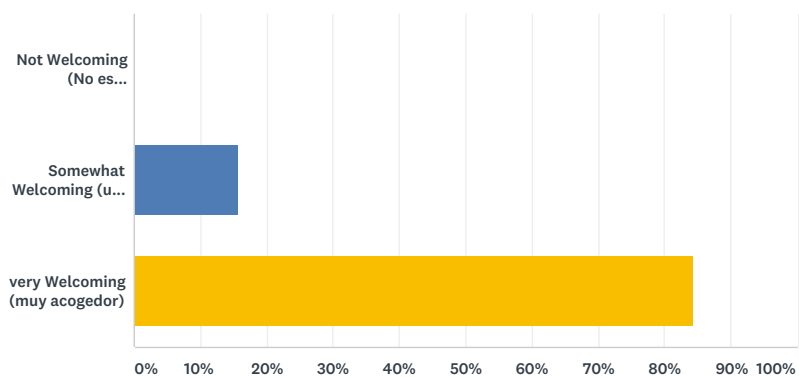
Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	81.58%	31
No	18.42%	7
TOTAL		38

Q5 How welcoming do you feel our congregation is to people of different ethnicities? ¿Qué tan acogedor le parece que nuestra congregación es para personas de diferentes etnicidades?

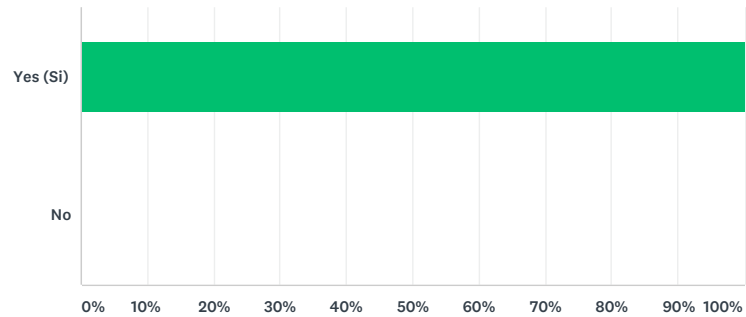
Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not Welcoming (No es acogedor)	0.00%	0
Somewhat Welcoming (un poco acogedor)	15.79%	6
very Welcoming (muy acogedor)	84.21%	32
TOTAL		38

Q6 Have you enjoyed seeing diversity in leadership on Sunday mornings? ¿Has disfrutado ver la diversidad en el liderazgo los domingos por la mañana?

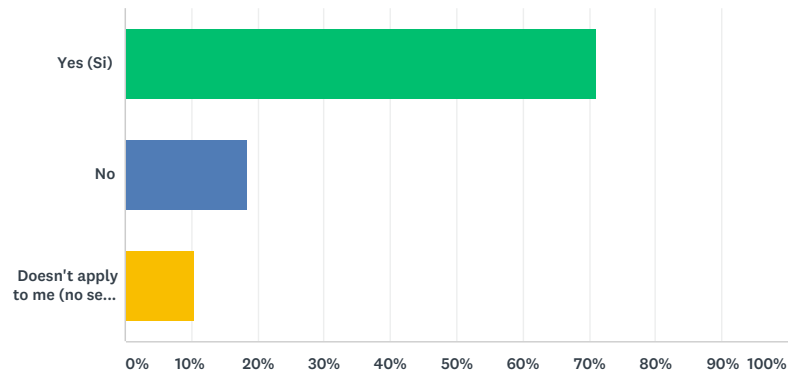
Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	100.00%	38
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		38

Q7 Do you feel the church is more diverse than it was before we had a Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries? ¿Sientes que la iglesia es más diversa de lo que era antes de que tuviéramos un Director de Juventud y Ministerios Multiétnicos?

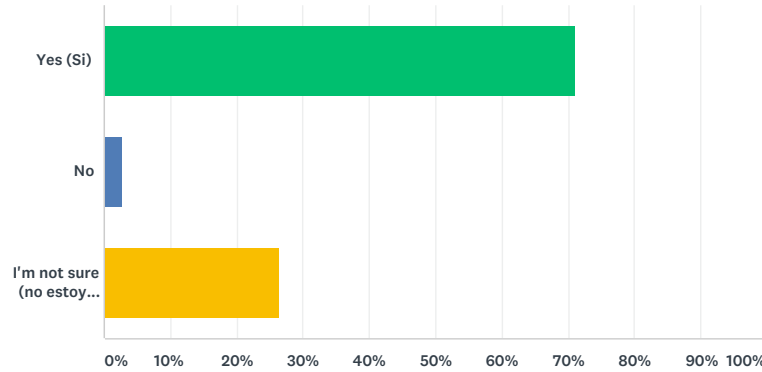
Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	71.05%	27
No	18.42%	7
Doesn't apply to me (no se aplica a mi)	10.53%	4
TOTAL		38

Q8 Would you say that the church is better off having a diverse congregation? ¿Diría usted que la iglesia es mejor teniendo una congregación diversa?

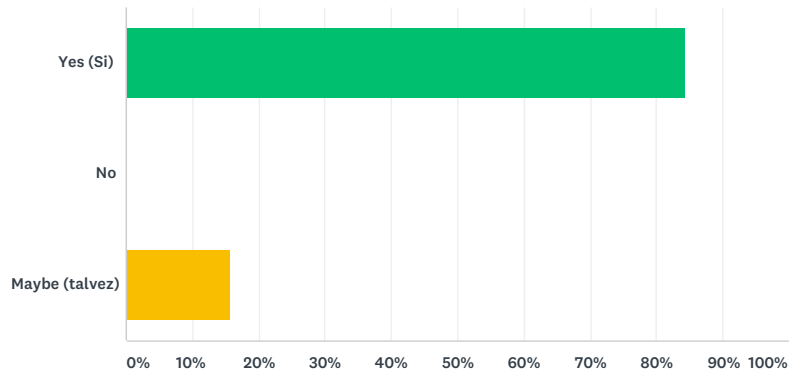
Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	71.05%	27
No	2.63%	1
I'm not sure (no estoy seguro)	26.32%	10
TOTAL		38

Q9 Do you think that it is important to have diversity in leadership?
¿Crees que es importante tener diversidad en el liderazgo?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	84.21%	32
No	0.00%	0
Maybe (talvez)	15.79%	6
TOTAL		38

Q10 Do you have anything to share (thoughts, advice, etc.) that would be helpful for us as we seek to be more multiethnic as a congregation?

¿Tiene algo que compartir (pensamientos, consejos, etc.) que serían útiles para nosotros cuando buscamos ser más multiétnicos como congregación?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 21

APPENDIX D

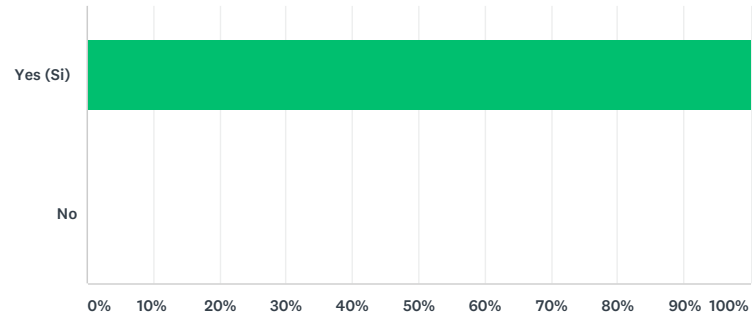
MULTICULTURAL QUESTIONNAIRE (CAUCASIAN)

Multicultural questionnaire

SurveyMonkey

Q1 Would you identify yourself as Caucasian? ¿Te identificarías como caucásico?

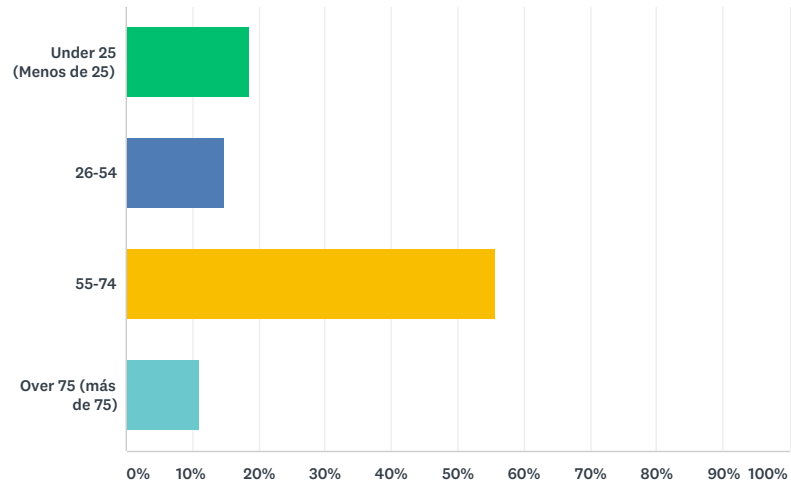
Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	100.00%	27
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		27

Q2 What is your age group? ¿Cuál es tu grupo de edad?

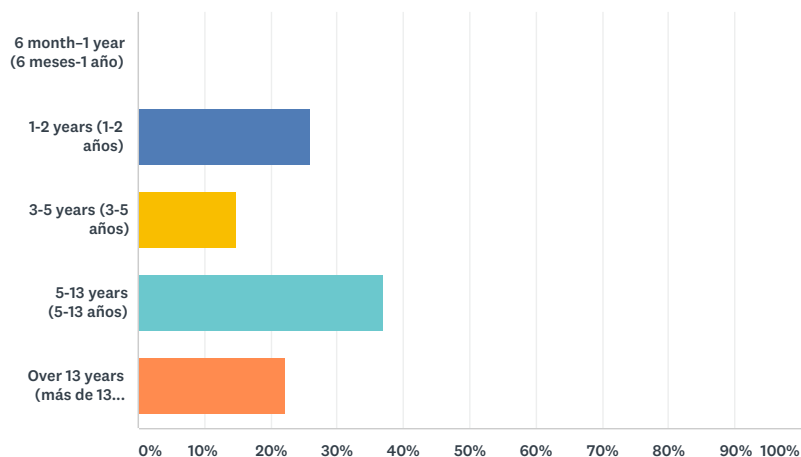
Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 25 (Menos de 25)	18.52%	5
26-54	14.81%	4
55-74	55.56%	15
Over 75 (más de 75)	11.11%	3
TOTAL		27

Q3 How long have you attended the Elm Street Community Church?
¿Cuánto tiempo ha asistido a la Iglesia Comunitaria de Elm Street?

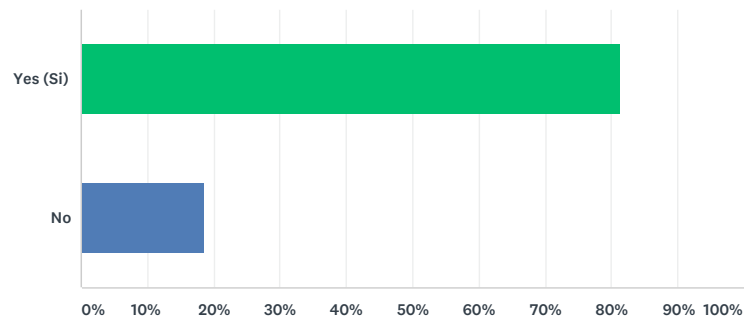
Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
6 month-1 year (6 meses-1 año)	0.00%	0
1-2 years (1-2 años)	25.93%	7
3-5 years (3-5 años)	14.81%	4
5-13 years (5-13 años)	37.04%	10
Over 13 years (más de 13 años)	22.22%	6
TOTAL		27

Q4 Do you think that it is important for churches to be multiethnic (have no more than 70% be from one ethnicity)? ¿Crees que es importante que las iglesias sean multiétnicas (tener no más del 70% en la iglesia ser de una etnicidad?)

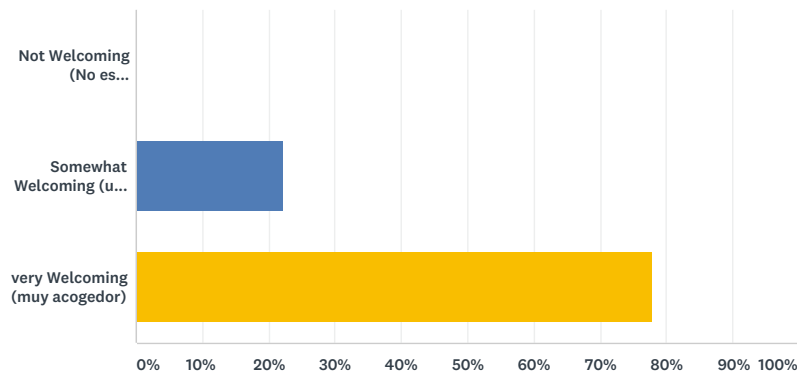
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ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)		81.48%	22
No		18.52%	5
TOTAL			27

Q5 How welcoming do you feel our congregation is to people of different ethnicities? ¿Qué tan acogedor le parece que nuestra congregación es para personas de diferentes etnicidades?

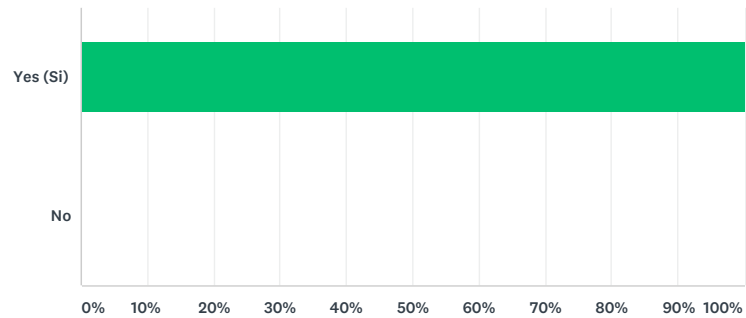
Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not Welcoming (No es acogedor)	0.00%	0
Somewhat Welcoming (un poco acogedor)	22.22%	6
very Welcoming (muy acogedor)	77.78%	21
TOTAL		27

Q6 Have you enjoyed seeing diversity in leadership on Sunday mornings? ¿Has disfrutado ver la diversidad en el liderazgo los domingos por la mañana?

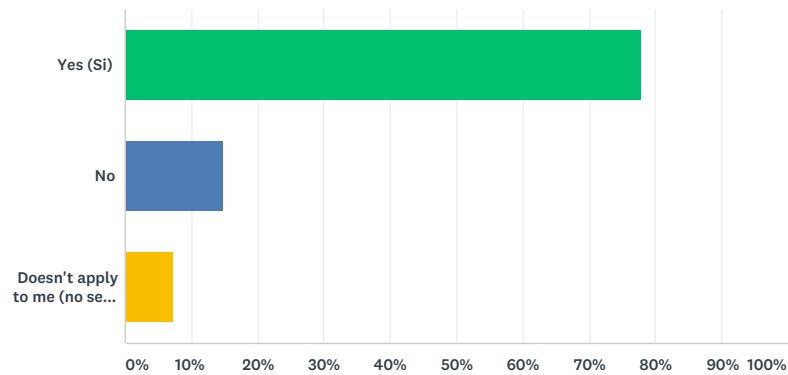
Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	100.00%	27
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		27

Q7 Do you feel the church is more diverse than it was before we had a Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries? ¿Sientes que la iglesia es más diversa de lo que era antes de que tuviéramos un Director de Juventud y Ministerios Multiétnicos?

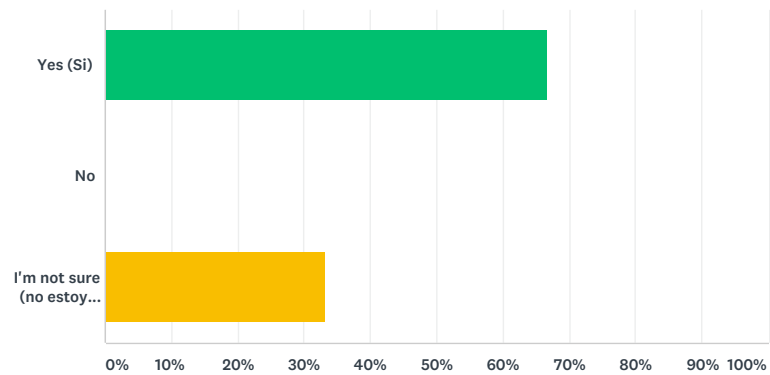
Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	77.78%	21
No	14.81%	4
Doesn't apply to me (no se aplica a mi)	7.41%	2
TOTAL		27

Q8 Would you say that the church is better off having a diverse congregation? ¿Diría usted que la iglesia es mejor teniendo una congregación diversa?

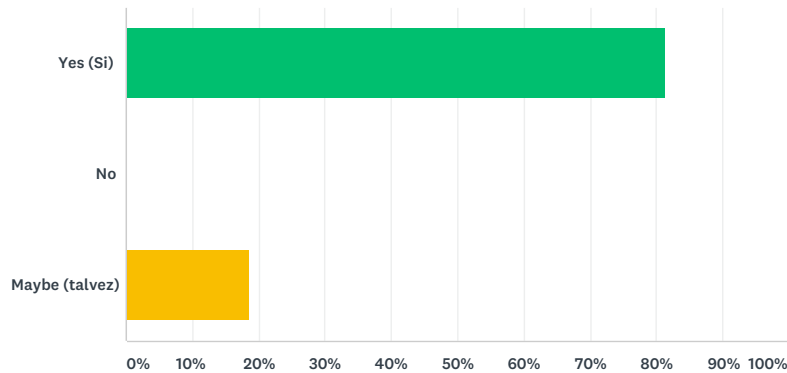
Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	66.67%	18
No	0.00%	0
I'm not sure (no estoy seguro)	33.33%	9
TOTAL		27

Q9 Do you think that it is important to have diversity in leadership?
¿Crees que es importante tener diversidad en el liderazgo?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	81.48%	22
No	0.00%	0
Maybe (talvez)	18.52%	5
TOTAL		27

APPENDIX E

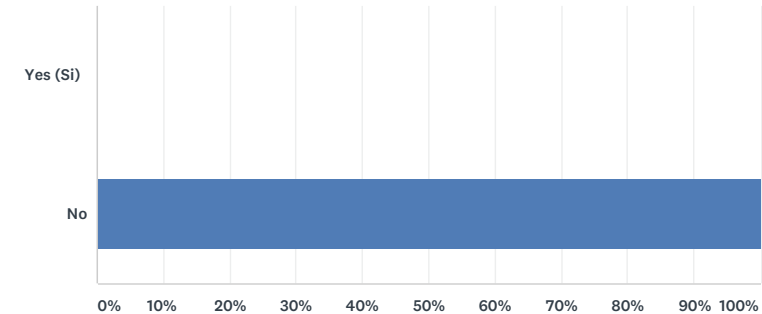
MULTICULTURAL QUESTIONNAIRE (NON-CAUCASIAN)

Multicultural questionnaire

SurveyMonkey

Q1 Would you identify yourself as Caucasian? ¿Te identificarías como caucásico?

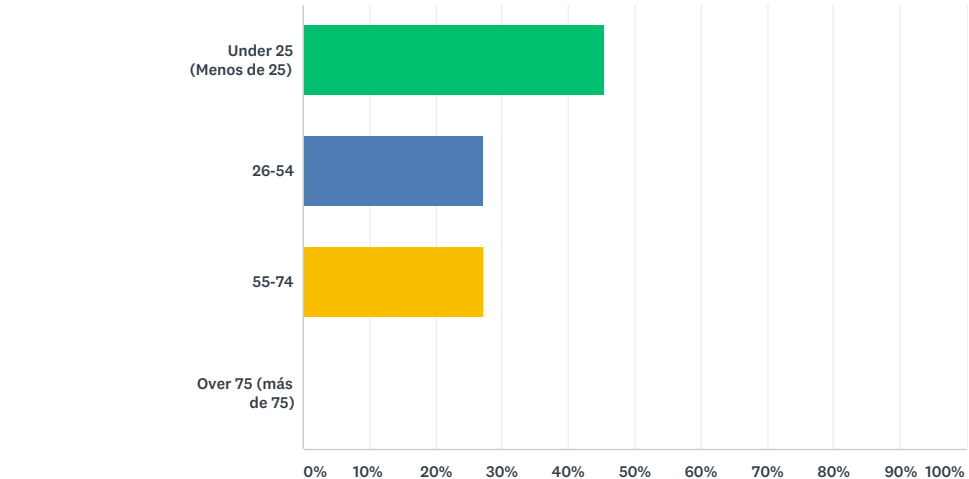
Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	0.00%	0
No	100.00%	11
TOTAL		11

Q2 What is your age group? ¿Cuál es tu grupo de edad?

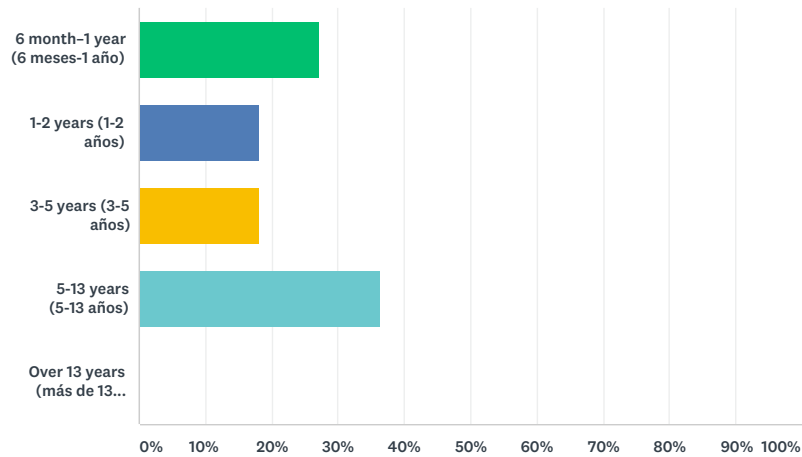
Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 25 (Menos de 25)	45.45%	5
26-54	27.27%	3
55-74	27.27%	3
Over 75 (más de 75)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		11

Q3 How long have you attended the Elm Street Community Church?
¿Cuánto tiempo ha asistido a la Iglesia Comunitaria de Elm Street?

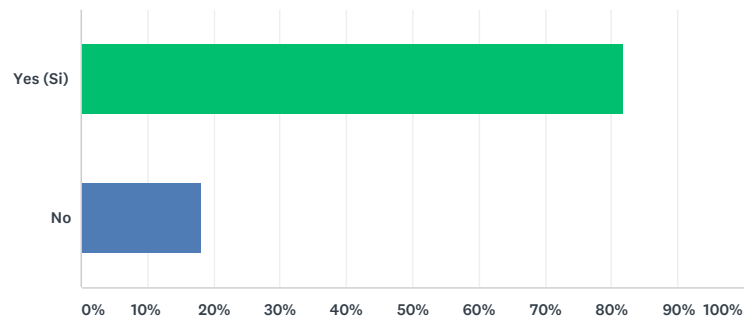
Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
6 month-1 year (6 meses-1 año)	27.27%	3
1-2 years (1-2 años)	18.18%	2
3-5 years (3-5 años)	18.18%	2
5-13 years (5-13 años)	36.36%	4
Over 13 years (más de 13 años)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		11

Q4 Do you think that it is important for churches to be multiethnic (have no more than 70% be from one ethnicity)? ¿Crees que es importante que las iglesias sean multiétnicas (tener no más del 70% en la iglesia ser de una etnicidad?)

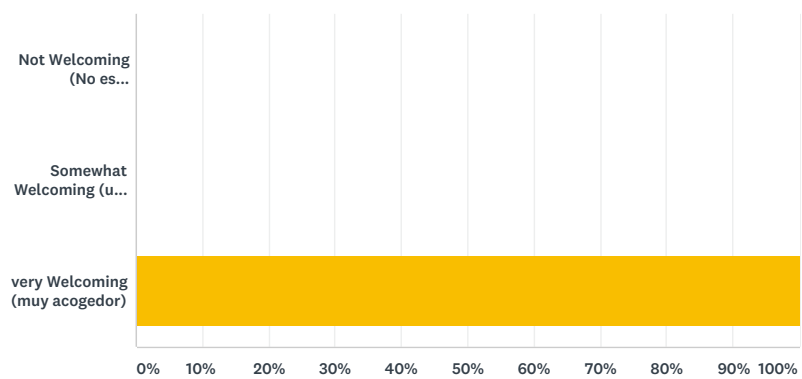
Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)		81.82%	9
No		18.18%	2
TOTAL			11

Q5 How welcoming do you feel our congregation is to people of different ethnicities? ¿Qué tan acogedor le parece que nuestra congregación es para personas de diferentes etnicidades?

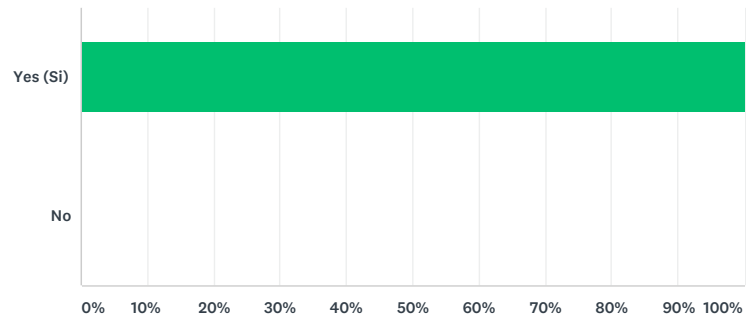
Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not Welcoming (No es acogedor)	0.00%	0
Somewhat Welcoming (un poco acogedor)	0.00%	0
very Welcoming (muy acogedor)	100.00%	11
TOTAL		11

Q6 Have you enjoyed seeing diversity in leadership on Sunday mornings? ¿Has disfrutado ver la diversidad en el liderazgo los domingos por la mañana?

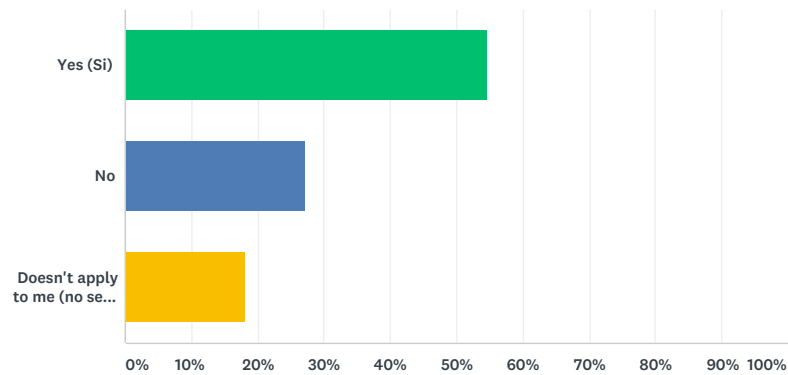
Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)		100.00%	11
No		0.00%	0
TOTAL			11

Q7 Do you feel the church is more diverse than it was before we had a Director of Youth and Multiethnic Ministries? ¿Sientes que la iglesia es más diversa de lo que era antes de que tuviéramos un Director de Juventud y Ministerios Multiétnicos?

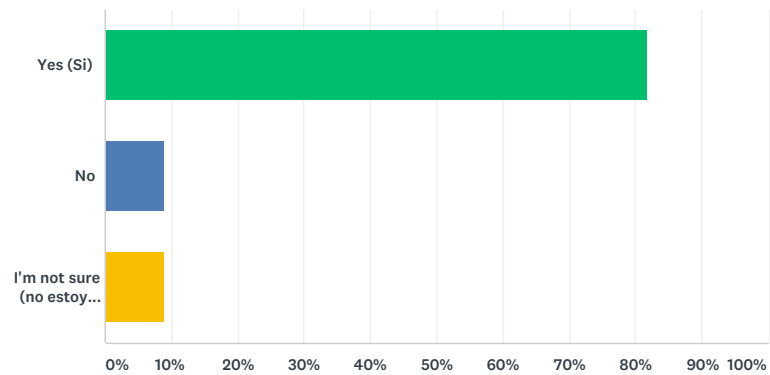
Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	54.55%	6
No	27.27%	3
Doesn't apply to me (no se aplica a mi)	18.18%	2
TOTAL		11

Q8 Would you say that the church is better off having a diverse congregation? ¿Diría usted que la iglesia es mejor teniendo una congregación diversa?

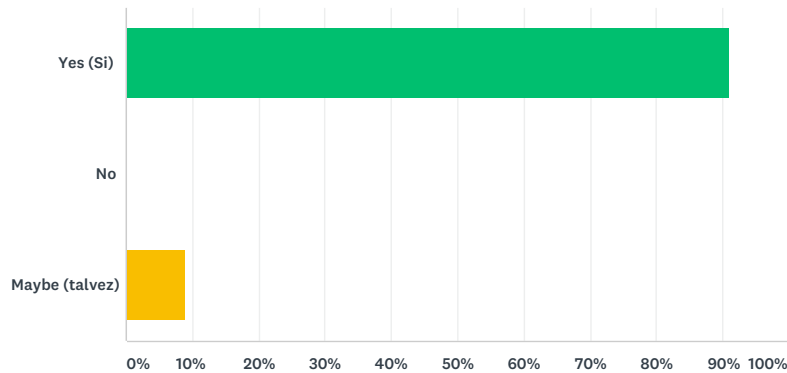
Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	81.82%	9
No	9.09%	1
I'm not sure (no estoy seguro)	9.09%	1
TOTAL		11

Q9 Do you think that it is important to have diversity in leadership?
¿Crees que es importante tener diversidad en el liderazgo?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (Si)	90.91%	10
No	0.00%	0
Maybe (talvez)	9.09%	1
TOTAL		11

APPENDIX F

ELM STREET COMMUNITY CHURCH DATA

Table A-1 Sunday Morning Attendance				
	12/18/16	1/22/17	12/17/17	1/21/18
Overall Attendance	37	35	53	58
Attendance Minority (non-Caucasian)*	9	9	16	20
Percentage (Minority)	24.32%	25.71%	30.19%	34.48%

*This table includes an approximate number of minorities (non-Caucasians) based on the researcher's understanding of the individuals in the congregation. Expectations of visitors ethnicity was based on color, language, or name. Due to the sensitive nature of ethnic diversity in churches, individuals (members, regular attendees, and visitors) were not asked what ethnicity they identify with.

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Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

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University of Lowell
Major: Civil Engineering

ServSafe Certified: Expiration 8/17/22

Professional Experience

2004-Present	Senior Pastor	Elm Street Community Church
	Oversee all aspects of ministry, working to transition church from an elderly ethnic (Finnish) congregation, to a multigenerational congregation, to a multiethnic congregation. Includes leading worship and retreats.	

2010-Present	President/Executive Director	Shining Light Ministries, Inc.
	Working to bring churches together to meet the needs of at-risk children, youth, and families in the Twin-Cities area, currently through an Adopt-A-Block program (off LA Dream Center model), youth center, and athletic mentoring.	

2002-2004	Youth Pastor	New Ipswich Congregational Church
	Worked with youth to integrate faith into action while having them become an active part of the congregation, as well as in civic engagement through a monthly Random Acts of Kindness program. Speaker at youth and elder retreats.	